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THE BOOK OF PAIN- STRUGGLE

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The Prophecy of the Fulfillment

PUBLISHED BY

H. SEGAL

IN THE

One Thousand-Eight Hundred and
Fortieth Year of the Diaspora
and the Twenty-Seventh Day of the Fifth
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CONTENTS

(FIRST HALF)

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PAIN-YOUTH'S CHILDHOOD.....	5
II. THE PAIN-YOUTH LONGS FOR FULFILLMENT.....	12
III. THE PAIN-YOUTH GETS MESSAGE.....	19
IV. THE PAIN-YOUTH TAKES THE ROAD TO THE CITY..	24
V. THE PAIN-YOUTH STRUGGLES IN THE CITY.....	33

(SECOND HALF)

VI. THE STRUGGLER TAKES THE ROAD AGAIN.....	42
VII. THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.....	48
VIII. THE STRUGGLER SEEKS IN THE DESERT.....	62
IX. THE STRUGGLER RETURNS WITH THE PROPHECY OF FULFILLMENT.....	72
X. THE STRUGGLER PROPHESES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY	79

The BOOK *of* PAIN-STRUGGLE

CALLED

The PROPHECY *of the* FULFILLMENT

FIRST HALF

CHAPTER I.

THE PAIN-YOUTH'S CHILDHOOD

I.

EARLY PAIN.

I was a lad, and once on a day,
My Mother's wild tongue-lashing
Drove me from out the Home; and away
Thro woods I hurried crashing.

And from a tree grown feeble and old
I tore a branchlet free
And, plunging passionate thro the wold,
Struck out exultingly.

Pausing for naught I saw or I heard,
I struck my ready blow;
Whether it was a bough or a bird
I struck it straightway low.

Trees to majestic solitude sworn
Shivered with mangled forms,
While there fell flowers everywhere torn,
And earth howled back my storms.

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Birds whirred and shrieked and even the bee
Droned warning as he sped,
Till, with a pall encompassing me,
I watch how all things fled.

Then, shadows, darkly gathering, crept
Around me, sure tho tardy,
Hiding near trees, lurked gnomes who're adept
To daunt a heart too hardy.

I was right glad to run from the wold
And find sun over me
Where, across miles of grain, it was bold
In crimson brilliancy.

II.

SUNSET-FEELING.

The flaming sunset sadly sinks
As I gaze over the lea,
While surging sweeps the subtle wind
And the grain sighs like a sea.

The plaintive cricket haunts my ear
As he skips, nosing the grass;
The wind sweeps on, but I won't bend
Like the grain, letting it pass!

The flaming sunset sadly sinks
As I stand watching its ire;
And how a helpless longing stirs
In my heart, burning with fire!

And oh, the yearning pain, pain, pain,
As I stand gazing afar!—
And faintly sounds the cricket's chirp
As he skips rillet and scar.

The sun is sinking, I must go—
How the wind fondles the wheat!
But I, heart-sore and unfulfilled,
I must turn homeward my feet.

THE PAIN-YOUTH'S CHILDHOOD.

III.

REMINISCENCES.

I.

Nightly the silky moon came in the sky
And bathed in its favorite soft cloud;
Beneath it, in the darkness, humbly lurked
The low-thatched cottage with its wooden bench;
And there a little dark-eyed girl would sit,
And, gazing at the moon-light musingly,
Her face would pale . . . and that was she who was.

And then would come an eager little boy
Who, opening a tiny creaking gate,
Would sit beside her, listening with rapture
To her voice of trembling sweetness blending
With the subtle wind . . . and that was I.
The moon would glimmer on our coupling heads
And elsewhere all seemed gloom and duskiness.

II.

The ominous red sun began to set,
And when we reached the pall of darkening woods
The surging silence seemed to stun us both;
Piercing the somber forest, unaware,
We found the giants sighing in the wind
And ranged about like dusky hosts at night
Who guard some vasty secret from the day;
She looked at me to see if I was scared
And I essayed a laugh, and she laughed, too,
But in the end, all-suddenly, she sobbed,
Her gaze grew piteous and I, alarmed;
Then I took heart and boldly forward strode
And she drew nearer, nestling while the arch,
Black shadows closed around us as we fled
To pierce the den of darkness looming large
And sprawling cavernously over all;
The huge ungainly trees hung over us
With somber leerings as we flitted by
And all the fallen leaves conspiring seemed
To noise our secret flight thro all the woods
As with each step, they cacklingly expired;
Affrighted, awed, we hastened tinily

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

In the gigantic wood, hand clasping hand
And head by head thro all our wanderings,
When, further on, the hidden owl's drear call
Made leap our timorous hearts and we but breathed
Each other's breathing, fearing to take ought
From the surrounding darkness surging round;
Still, breaking twigs would snap beneath our feet,
And, walking, we grew numb with long suspense,
Until, when I bent whispering in her ear
To cheer her somewhat, lo, she almost slept!

And then the lyre-like songs of wind-swept pines
Made music passing strange and weird, the while
Our private whispers hovered sweetly on
Enchanted air, all tuneably and low;
And then we seemed like little lovers sweet
Whose twin-conversing mystic souls kept all
The jarring elements in harmony
While softly leaves descanted thro the truce,
Until the gusty, ire-blown wind grew wild,
Pursuing thro the dreary forest-ways.
I thought she must be cold, and straightly drew
My jacket off and therewith wrapped her warm,
Altho she murmured thereat hazily.
Sweet were her eyes of mildest duskiness
As leaning trustingly on me she walked.

We wandered endlessly, till, on a sudden,
Faintly to our hearing came afar
A dear and balmy chime of village-bells;
Our hearts leaped up and we stepped briskly forth;
I thought how she, the dreamy-eyed, and I
Would soon be housed together, safe and sound!
And as the dark began to thin in front
And we went swiftly on, we laughed outright.
Thence, happily, we walked until the lights
Began to gleam within the brooding houses
And all the woods began to straggle like
The panting leaders of a winded pack
Long left behind, exhausted in the chase;
And suddenly the woods, so teeming-huge,
Seemed left behind as in discouragement,
And we were in the quiet-sleeping town.

THE PAIN-YOUTH'S CHILDHOOD.

IV.

END-OF-THE-SUMMER FEELING.

Oh! for this grass!
Oh! for these trees!
Oh! for this greenness!—
It is doomed!
Something has fled—
Something has changed—
Something now makes me
Feel entombed!

Only a year!—
Bringing such hope,
Bringing such pain, tho,
Light and shade!
Come back, oh year,
Come back, you hopes,
Come back, you pain, even,
I'm afraid!

V.

FALL-FEELING.

Ah, autumn, autumn! soul of sadness, dreamers' scourge!
Heart-sick, I wander passionate thro clipped
And helpless forests whining their own dirge
Or breathlessly awaiting Him who stripped
Their sisters of their summer joyousness!
Where are you, sweet comrades, greeting me
So blithesomely as was your wont in dress
Of living green? No answer! everywhere
I trace the steps of Death, where trembling trees,
Knee-deep in garments of dead leaves, stand bare:
And here I see the brook which ran to seas,
Now stagnant, save where rippled by a breeze!

Panting, I hurry, seeking far and wide,
And everywhere the mocking Death has been:
In vain, at his approach, they trembling bide
With happy smiles, forsaking that fair green
He loathes, to don the yellow, gold, and red!

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But He, remorseless, unallayed, would smite
Them even as they smile to mask their dread
With autumn colors of resplendent hue:
Ere yet 'tis yellow clad the beech takes fright,
And chestnuts still in greenish yellow sue,
When his sere breath despoils their leaves of dew!

Others go elsewhere to the fullsome crops
To wrest the treasure from the summer's grave
With lusty hands, but I, who lack the props
Which thrive such labor, idle on and pave
The way to heart-sick longing and despair!
And still I wander by the cackling leaves
And snapping branches lying dry and bare,
Until, at length, I turn my listless feet
To sassafras which teems with song, yet, grieves
The haunted soul with memories of the fleet,
Dead time, of which this is an echo sweet!

VI.

SNOW-TIDINGS.

Listless the winds begin to blow,
Limply the branches sway:
Wistful the days now seem to go,
Fainting how loth away!

Darker the sky begins to loom,
Drawing on earth its hood:
Fearful the oaks now creak and gloom,
Beckon the soughing wood.

Softly a balmy cattle-low
Mellows upon the lea:
Washing and swishing to and fro
Answers the stealthy sea.

Washes again the stealthy sea,
Resting and spurning rest:
Stealthily still and fiercely free,
Wrestling the wind's behest.

THE PAIN-YOUTH'S CHILDHOOD.

Over the sighing sea and shore,
Rising and falling low,
Curdles a cry which screams before
Tidings of coming snow.

VII.

WINTER-FEELING.

Now that the wintry wastenesses
Are come again,
Widely the earth seems buried, crushed,
Beneath the fen
Of incalculable snow!

Oh, for the banished year, now cold,
Responseless, sear!
True, it was fraught with strangest pain!—
But 'twas some dear,
Unobtrusive Call, I know.

All my ideas and ideals
Seem numb with cold;
Naught but the silence of white death,
Bloodless and bold,
Seems to breathe on last year's glow!

CHAPTER II.
THE PAIN-YOUTH LONGS FOR
FULFILLMENT

I.

END-OF-THE-WINTER FEELING.

The sun-shine beaming thro the chill
Gleamed on every snow-clad hill
And up my spirit gayly flew
Till I sang every song I knew,
Gladly sang every song I knew!

So free of care, so gay was I,
Whistling up in the cloud-lit sky!
And yet the willful tears but grew,
As I sang all the songs I knew,
Sadly sang all the songs I knew!

"Some songs for me and my queer heart;
For the melting snow, a part!"
I said and sang and bled and blew
And I sang all the songs I knew,
Madly sang all the songs I knew!

II.

SPRING-FEELING.

The ice-fields boomed and boomed triumphantly,
My nostrils smelt the early breath of spring,
The waters of my soul were loosened free,
I snorted like a colt, my heart took wing!
From rock to rock I bounded jubilant,
I woke the echoes with my new-found voice,
I burst into a world of tree and plant,

THE PAIN-YOUTH LONGS FOR FULFILLMENT.

I shouted in the heavens smiling clear,
Hilarious I heard the thrush rejoice,
I yelled, I straightway answered to his cheer;
We both cried, Wake, oh world! Spring, Spring is here!

I stand mid fragrant, teeming things, like one
Who happens on a paradise of green
And fears to speak lest penalties unknown
Afflict the strange and unsuspecting scene!
What subtle murmurings! how all seems fraught
With surging love! The mating birds pursue
Each other like the mocking dryad sought
By swift-impassioned faun thro deepest wood;
I hear a panting hum, a pulse all thro,
As tho the procreative earth is sued
Resistlessly by one with love imbued.

The evening wet lies odorous about
The apple-blossoms trembling in the wind;
The zephyrs seem to search their secrets out
And wistfully bring buried thoughts to mind,
As tender twilight deepens silently:
And now the slender moon reigns overhead
While earth seems robed in new nobility
And I'm like one above all hopes and fears;
Like one who's lived too long or too long dead . . .
Am I not happy now that spring appears?
Yes, happy—happy to the brink of tears!

III.

SPRING-LONGING.

Why is it, now that Spring is here again
And old-time lilac breezes play
With young, sweet grass thro field and glen,
My heart in pain now melts away?

Oh something's lacking! something's calling in
A puling, gently-whispered sigh! . . .
Is it to do some deed of pleasing sin?
Or plunge in somewhere, fight and die!

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IV.

SEEKING.

Oh nature, I will seek in you !
I'll seek within your shadowed caves,
Beside your placid-moving streams
Or regal-running cataracts :
I'll run into your sweet-breathed woods
And bury me in their cool depths
And on my belly, watch the squirrels
Leap miraculously far
With tiny squeaks, while all the trees
Are hushed with somber-sounding melody :
Unseen, I'll watch the pecker tap,
The birds pursue, the lizard crawl,
The serpent, like an entrail of
The earth, come out and bask like me,
While I upon the grass drink in
The stretch of subtle sounds which tremble
On the murmuring far ground :
Or I will go to stagnant pools,
The dreaded swamp with muddy water
Crowned, where life is nourished still—
So dank and rank yet satisfied !
I'll watch it—maybe what I seek
Lies cunning there, evading men :
And I will put my ear to every
Rotted log—for sometimes, may
Not life, perchance, be lurking there ?
Or I will sit upon the rock
Which rises massive in the lake
And watch the temper of the water
And sudden plunging of a bass,
Felt like a flash from worlds unknown.
Or I will wade with naked feet
Among the shallow waterflags
And watch the cooling, downy mud
Curl out between my every toe ;
And I will reach among the lilies,
Touching with my fingers e'en
The fairest, farthest of them all,
Where she rules o'er the undertow

THE PAIN-YOUTH LONGS FOR FULFILLMENT.

And none but fools would hazard thus.
And I will take a boat and row me
To the lake's far end, and pause,
And see the circles round my oars
Grow less and less until they cease
Upon the tremulous still water:
All alone I'll sit and listen
Till the shadows slowly creep
Upon the lake, and winds begin
To gently dimple on the surface,
Whining on the dusky shores:
I'll watch strange tints enrich the skies,
The wondrous hues appearing like
Strange visitations from far realms
Of glory, high in soul-rule, yet
Not void of longing and high pain;
And there I'll sit and drink in all
The subtle-tinted dark-blue eve,
The dusky glints of water and
The mountain-presence on the shore,
The hazy flight of king-fishers,
The whip-poor-will's faint-voiced call;
There, resting on my oars, I'll sit—
Oh nature, maybe I will find
The thing I ever seek in you!

V.

ASTRAEA OR STAR-LONGING.

I.

Sick with the scent of honeysuckle sweet,
The arching, crimson-breasted peony
And subtle violets beneath my feet,
I wandered up and down where eye could see
Like some wild, poisoned, deathly-stricken thing
Searching some secret place where it can lie
And, panting out its soul-mist, lose its sting—
Till, unaware, I found you in the sky
Like a reviving gust of cooling air;
And now the night-hush broods and still you're there!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

These bird-like bobbings in the nest of night!
What would they utter? Baffling, strange compeer,
With wistful glances of some haunting sprite,
My longings may not lag when you are here!
Again I'm in the rustling huge cool wood
With dwarf-like tribes of mushrooms, bald and odd,
Or where, like sentinals in chatting mood,
The daisies stand on open fields and nod!
Or in the wet fresh grass where one may spy
Dew-webs which now film-coronets must lie!

Below me croons a dusky-glancing stream
Which wins its tender way thro pebbly rift,
Thro ridges, past the willows, gleam on gleam,
While glow-worms in the fragrant darkness lift
Gold heads and nestle near the water's edge;
And now they gleam and gleam, reflecting down
Its length like double torches. Do you pledge
Me road-friends true and dear as these have grown?
Oh, star! and shall I hear these crickets still?
(What is there on the road I must fulfill?)

II.

Strange, how there's something with all-shattering hand
Which I obey and all in ashes true!
Time after time I see one smiling bland
Above each wish! oh star, it must be you!
For you are never wholly seized of men
Tho your pursuit's delirium for aye;
Your foredoomed lovers prize each marshy fen,
So fell, they tumble weaklings on the way
And from the strong draw joy of puissant deeds
Ere they, too, fall and mingle with the weeds!

Lo, how you shot into the tender heaven;
How like a saving genius you appeared!
Like one to whom the mastery is given
You came and shone and naught was to be feared!
Your brilliance in the twilight was so frank
My heart began to leap and to renew
As it beheld you where the sun-king sank,
Above his crimson, in the slender blue . . .
And now you glitter coldly in the night
And few would know you from your satellite!

THE PAIN-YOUTH LONGS FOR FULFILLMENT.

Oh, you, beneath your brow of cloudy blue!
To you, is not all mankind like a sun
Which sets, on lighting mist when it was new
And, fruitless, sinks into the sea all shun?
So mystic-wise you're gleaming from the sky's
Dark forestry, kindling me with doubt and pain;
Pain of despair which like a night-mare lies,
So that the singer even singing yearns again,
Until he deems the garden of his muse
A dreary close whose outlet he pursues!

III.

I caught you ere you deftly slipped away,
I came and saw you waiting here for me
Like a shy girl upon her trysting day;
I felt that you were sent that I should see . . .
Surely you're sinking toward the mighty town,
The city full of brazen-throated men
From whence I've heard but echoes of renown
With quakings strange, as at a lion's den . . .
Fade not, my star, there's somewhat I would say . . .
Leave not the heavens empty, leaden, grey.

We must have made appointment in my sleep,
For else, how was it I arose at dawn,
Lo, in the filmy morning did I creep
And met you waiting like a distant faun?
And you had mystic signs you wanted read,
The charm was in the air, I know it, star!
Some message from my mighty fathers dead
Who want fulfillment where they sleep afar—
My life is somehow bound with theirs I know—
Yes, yes, I'll take the high-way, I will go! . . .

Fade, fade . . . what measure of perfection earth
Can offer, you have, too! What tho I miss?—
My strivings see horizons slink in mirth?
Better than this deserted, safe abyss!
Lead on, I'll follow you, my star, lead on;
These grudging paths must widen as I come,
The thistle bend, trod low, its nettles gone,
These iry, heavy-shouldered winds which hum,
Must even turn and tell you, paling star,
The mortal answers to your signs afar!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

VI.

RAIN-FEELING.

Young leaves are frantic on each branch,
The naked willows sway;
The murky clouds are crawling fast,
Dust's rising where it lay.

Now soft the rain is coming down
In slanting lines of wet,
All heedful, silent, hastening
Like minions at a threat.

Like dancing sprites the many drops
Are capering on the stone
While eagerly green fields gape wide
Each tiny splash to own.

How fragrant is the good old sod
Refreshed beneath the drench,
As steadily earth sucks and sucks
With thirst that naught can quench!

Pour down, pour down, you dear sweet rain,
New buds you now will ope;
You bring new scents, new sounds to earth—
And me, me bring new hope!

CHAPTER III.

THE PAIN-YOUTH GETS MESSAGE.

I.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS.

Here, on my belly, I lie
And watch and scan;
There, o'er the gleaming bright stream,
The soldiers wrestle,
Man and man.

Oh! how they play and they shout! . . .
But from afar
Pants now a hum of the town
Which murmurs over
Cliff and Scar. . . .

Oh! this so hungering hum
So full of pain!
How like a bee, full of quest,
And sooner, later,
Not in vain!

II.

SELF-QUESTIONING.

To-day I saw a chipmunk stealthily
Sitting upon a slender branch;
How steadily he gazed at me—
As tho 'twere deed in no wise staunch!

Madly I hurled a stone—and down he fell . . .
Limp little body, am I then
So void of hell? . . . Since you can't tell,
We'll think we're masterful again!

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III.

WORLD INCOMPREHENSIBLE.

Kindling clouds serenely sail in blue,
Rich with rifts of glamour, eyes which gleam
O'er the open field so fresh in hue,
Greenest gully and the silver stream.

How this world-I-do-not-understand
In my heart seems lying like a stone!
Shall I build or crush with ruthless hand—
Since it neither welcomes nor lets alone!

I am I and you are you, it laughs;
Yet its mocking glance, alluring, deep,
Like a woman's when her lover chafes,
Mocks and draws with pangs that never sleep.

IV.

QUESTION.

Sparkling and happy all the day
Are the field-daisies in bonnets of white!
They are eagerly sunning!
Their gold-hearts are gay!

Droning away upon his quest
Speeds the bee, thrifty and sure of himself!
In his masterly dunning
He fills his behest!

Clasping their hands around the sky
All the clouds mutely look down from their height;
They have ceased from their running;
They pause and they spy.

Where is the secret of the thing
That *my* tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth
And *mine* arm has no cunning?
From whence does it spring?

THE PAIN-YOUTH GETS MESSAGE.

V.

MOMENTS OF FAITH.

Like an eagle bound for unequalled heights
When lightning makes men shout,
Like a rainbow hanging when
The world seemed lost in doubt.

Like the love beneath all the bickering
Of lovers as they tiff,
Or a mighty storm around
A placid-sailing skiff:

As a crystal star in the early eve
Appearing suddenly,
Like a monarch unannounced;
So comes my faith to me.

VI.

DUMB.

The petals cling well together
Round the rose,
Like maidens that walk the heather,
Nose to nose.

The aspens dance well with glee,
Their leaves still romp,
But what do I hear and see
In all this pomp?

For, where are my people all
From whom I come?
I think that they everywhere call
But I am dumb.

I take no more joy in you,
Oh living green!
Nor you, peaceful sky of blue
Who hang serene!

There is no more joy in song;
Oh birds, be still!
And yet, how the hills give tongue!—
They have their will!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

VII.

THE WIND-MESSAGE.

Ah, hark!
I hear, afar, a sounding, surging roar,
Like mighty flames behind me, in the forest!
It is the Wind, the heaving messenger,
Who rushes on with pregnant words, regardless!
But lo!
The giant trees oppose him!
They will not let him enter!
Come on, oh Wind!
Desist, oh trees!
Let pass the mighty runner!
But growling, howling, shrieking, sounds the fray,
The chattering leaves e'en rail indignantly
With puny fury, tho the wind unseats them
And helplessly they rustle on the ground,
While I still anxiously await the end—
The only one who has no portion here!
There is a roaring hoarse and angry
Of mighty wrestlers mad with combat!
I hear a fearful, creaking, straining, groaning:
It is the Wind, I ween, with shoulder set
Against the doubling, choking, yielding trees:
Crack—crash!
Now is he bursting, rushing thro, at last!
Afar
I hear trees falling like their fruit in Autumn!
And now I hear him with commotion mighty!
Awful God!
This for me?
For he embraces me with surging arms
And hastes no further in his vast career:
What wouldst thou, Wind?
He does not answer, but his kiss is on my forehead!
He murmurs in my ear; dumb, hurried words, he murmurs;
He worries at my cloak,
Would seek admittance somewhere;
I do not understand thee, whining Wind!
What wouldst thou, Wind?
His ardor doubles;

THE PAIN-YOUTH GETS MESSAGE.

His whispers are like pitiful complainings,
Like dumb complainings of a beast in pain;
I listen helplessly:
My clothing flaps before his fury
But still I stand in pain of doubt:
What is thy news?
Speak, speak, oh Wind!
There is a hopeless sobbing in the branches;
Hoarser and wilder grows his gusty voice,
And all my body, which was erst so chill,
Now warms with constancy of his embrace:
Speak, speak, oh Wind, I warm but understand not!
But on a sudden, he no longer lashes:
He stops, he shifts, grows calmer, even distant:
Oh! he is leaving me, he is discouraged!
Now is he crossing to the further shore,
To yon great-timbered wood!
I stretch vain hands to him—
Tell me, oh Wind, do not desert me now,
In agony of doubt, am I the Chosen?
He does not answer, he is sullen, he
Is hurtling, roaring, thro the other wood!
I wail entreaty but my hollow pleas
Faint languishingly on the soulless air!
Afar, the Wind's new war with branch and tree
Again reverberates how mightily! . . .
He no more heeds me now.
But oh, what then am I? . . .

Enough! I am apprised!
Enough! I choose myself!

CHAPTER IV.

THE PAIN-YOUTH TAKES THE ROAD
TO THE CITY.

I.

MORNING ROAD-PRAYER.

Hail! you glory-sun,
Mighty eye!
Hail! gold lashes sweeping
Earth and sky!—

Now naked I pause
In your sight
Ere yet I have set
Toward the fight;

Hail! you pathless sky,
Vasty realm!
Hail! pointed grass-blades,
Earth's brave helm!—

For me have you naught?
Oh, I know
Some Fate must await
With my bow!

II.

FOX ON THE ROAD.

Ah, well-a-day!
Ere he slunk so slow and spurningly away,
What a look the old fox gave me, cunning brute!
Cynic-wise—since long sustained by craft astute—
How amused that I, unarmed and guileless, went
My new-found way!

THE PAIN-YOUTH TAKES THE ROAD TO THE CITY.

III.

ROAD-MESHES.

Here, safe at last! I thought that marsh
 Embower'd in flaunting green
Which gripped my feet, would be my tomb!
 What zeal and what pains to screen
Its passion grim for my poor form!
 For ere I had dreamt my fears
I stood on wheezing, yielding ground
 Which wept sympathetic tears!

How eagerly it winked and sank
 From under my feet! how sly!
And to return seemed now to late—
 If not, just as far, to fly;
Beside, my heart beat furious
 To turn not nor pause but go,
Tho had I known what all this meant
 No prize could persuade this woe!

I hurried, treading nameless plants
 Of rankest demean; a snake
Drew in his hasty folds from me,
 And prickles began to break
And send their swarming insects forth,
 Sad beggars, who fled my feet
As men do pestilence. Then I,
 The reckless, became discreet;

But like fish-bearing ospreys fast
 Who flee, and tho eagles chase,
Are loth to drop their fish, acquired
 In mighty dispute of race,
So, on, impetuous, I went,
 Altho the embittered wet
Fed on the tender flesh like goads;
 Thus deeper within the net!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

And suddenly I sank knee-deep!
'Twere wise, to have turned that time,
But now's too late, of course, I thought;
So further I went in slime,
To bathe in mud as yet untried;
And then, it seemed wise to've turned
When last I thought thereon—too late,
Again said my heart and burned.

With panting breath I plunged again,
And made for the fair green field
Which smiled alluringly beyond
As toward the spot I reeled;
On, on! but that dark monster's grip
Still followed, would not begone
Altho I plucked my feet from it
With many a curse thereon.

I reached the fair green field and thought,
"At last, here's the end of pain!"—
When lo, I sank—it was the same,
The ever-relentless bane!
Then, croaking triumph-songs of hate,
Behind me began a frog,
And soon, in concert everywhere,
Resounded the whole wet bog.

My lungs shot whistling breath like mad,
My forehead rained sweat in streams;
But imperturbably the clouds
Displayed their veneer of beams.
No help! with savage, bursting heart
I plunged like a crippled thing
Which wildly flounders on, altho
It only augments its sting.

Pausing was death, I seemed to feel,
And yet I was tiring fast,
When, lo, I spied a blessed stone
Of stupidest hue, at last!
Mounted, it held till I could mount
His stupid companion; here
I flew from stone to stone and laughed,
For surely the way shone clear!

THE PAIN-YOUTH TAKES THE ROAD TO THE CITY.

A gentle breeze now stealing in
Blew fresh on my brow of sweat;
It cooled and braced my trembling limbs
With soothing as of regret;
And yet, I paused not till I saw
The wistful forget-me-nots,
Where earth felt good beneath my feet,
Albeit, 'twas swamp in spots.

A mountain loomed before. No help!
So, indefatigably,
I climbed, tho climbing seemed sad work
And cruel for each tired knee;
And then, the traitor weeds I grasped
Snapped even within my hand,
Altho too late to cause my fall;
I sprang and my foot would stand.

With one great bound I gained the top,
Thence, downward from rock to rock
I sprang exultingly and soon
Heard crowing afar a cock;
From thence, with trespass manifold
On many a calm abode,
Thro orchard, meadow or fair field,
I gained me the dusty road.

IV.

BIRD ON THE ROAD.

Oh, what are you?—
From afar, you
Seem a source
Of the joy
I would fain lay to heart—
That from which I'll not part
Yet not once
Have enjoyed
Save in gleams
Or in dreams!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

If each note
In your throat
Would be changed
To a dew,
What a torrent would glance
In the sun like a dance,
What a pour,
What a stream,
What a glitter
With each twitter!

If each trill
In your bill
Could be changed
To a jest,
Oh, what echoes of cheer,
Oh, what merriment here!
Oh what joy,
Oh what fun,
And what wit
In each twit!

Maybe, this
Full-voiced bliss
Is a pledge,
Is a sign
Of the aim of the earth,
Soul of ultimate birth,
Fore-taste dim
In a trill?—
Can it be
Meant for me?

II.

As I hear,
Strange, how clear
With each note,
Thrilling sweet,
Comes an after-dismay
And a pain in the lay,
Echo-like,
Hunting down
Every note
That would float!

THE PAIN-YOUTH TAKES THE ROAD TO THE CITY.

Ne'er can ever
I dissever
Joy from pain,
Pain from joy!
And from now I can see
'Tis the world's melody;
Joy and pain,
Pain and joy,
Shrilling gladly,
Singing sadly!

This must be
Destiny,
With its wings
Light and dark
Setting me on its path,
With its calm and its wrath,
All its hope
And despair,
Its sublime
And its slime!

Nameless Bird
I have heard!
Hope, Despair,
Twain-voiced thing,
Float away with you now
As you speed toward the brow
Of the red,
Swooning sun,
Like a charm
At alarm!

V.

ROAD-TURNS.

Yet one more bend
At the end
Of the road
And be deceived
But not grieved—
Tirri-lirra! til-a-li!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

All promised much
Till the touch
Of my foot;
Now, here I am—
Same old sham!—
Tirri-lirra! til-a-li!

Had I been fresh,
"Let the mesh
Have its way!"
But I was tired,
Yet was fired!—
Tirri-lirra! til-a-li!

Would see ahead! . . .
Will I shed
The roadster's dress,
Pause not, but fly?
So will I?
Tirri-lirra! til-a-li!

VI.

ON THE ROAD-SIDE, NEAR THE CITY.

And whom should I upon the road-way meet
But, sure enough, a school-friend lying prone
And by the road-side, even where he fell,
Faint, stricken with the wounds of too much battling,
Needing comrade-aid and medicine.
He was a painter, disappointed. Him
I carried to his room where long he lay
And after many days, I heard him speak
Half clearly, half in fever, unaware:

"My country-friend! dear, blundering man, so odd,
So awkward, there, among my many physics,
So fearful, lest his fond adventures scold him
With dire calamities of broken glass-ware!
Oh friend, dear, patient, kindly-hearted friend!
I wonder, would you break your chafing heart,
As I do now, abed, because, forsooth!
Some few poor pictures, fruit of toil and blood

THE PAIN-YOUTH TAKES THE ROAD TO THE CITY.

And fiery dreaming, found no favor with
The sapient world! . . . What matters, I am sick
Of this fond-foolish fight and I want rest!
Oh, rest, rest, rest!—be rid of these accursed
Paint-canvases and judges over them—
With heart as clear of such bedevilling ills
As summer leaf of snow! . . . The fever, hope,
The frenzy, work; the bearing fealty,
Ay, compromise!—and failure's grin at last!
What recked I cold or hunger crying up
Their pulling, screaming grievances ignored
Like falling rain-drops on an untinned roof!
But these vile, hateful cynics of this craft—
Oh, I could turn my face against the wall
And die with smile of bliss upon my lips!
Forget! oh, to forget, to shoulder off
These rank, ungrateful offsprings of my soul
In calm indifference, even like a child . . .

There is the sun so merry with my room,
So cheery in its love of things; and there's the grass,
Content in one long green to deck the earth,
The wet, fresh-scented earth, stretched far and wide . . .
How vaguely beckons the old forest there!
If I could leave this wretched bed, I'd know
What light and mystic winds now undulate
Those somber trees, so noble in their might!
Oh, now to whittle me a good lithe stick
And, whistling, throwing stones, to saunter out,
Scaling forbidden fences, swimming creeks,
Embracing earth, so long estranged from me!
Oh, oh! to be abroad, abroad, and like
A high-born hero, stalk thro field and forest
Of the combative yet yielding earth. . .
How many tiny streamlets, throwing not
The faintest glitter to my glances here,
Now take their cool prim way thro all the woods
And humming each its individual tune!
Oh, that all this should seem so far from me!
Have I not sought them? Are we not as one?
Look, see! Are these my pictures, then, so bad?
There's one—"The Sea-waif," there; a lordly child
Seated beside the sea, with round, proud limbs,

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

Watching the turbulent, portentous ocean
While his golden tresses stream behind.
That one which you see there, I call "The Fall"—
A sunset smiling thro an Autumn wood
With leaves of orange, yellow, red or gold
Strangely transfigured by the sad red glow;
How often have I mused on this myself
In sunset moods, before the eager thought
Impelled me thus to seize and ply the brush! . . .
That one's a study almost all in grey—
"Mother and Son On Way to Hospital";
A lead-hued sky, and street of glancing slush—
The Mother pressing on with drawn, tight look,
The soul of struggling poverty heroic
And full of energetic mother-passion
As she almost drags her whimpering boy . . .
Here's one—but—pshaw! all this is drivel, fever—
So!—thanks, old man—it's grewsome stuff, my boy!"

Mumbling, he fell asleep, at last, hot soul,
While I sat there and watched him as he slept,
Musing upon this rush of mighty currents
From the city full of struggling men.

CHAPTER V.

THE PAIN-YOUTH STRUGGLES IN THE CITY

I.

AT MIDNIGHT IN THE GREAT CITY.

And when I stood all alone
In the slumbering town
Each house was mightily barred—
And for all its renown!

And darkling gleamed little lights
On their bridges so wide,
But in the sky not a star
Showed its rays for a guide.

And overhead rushed their trains
With a crash and rebound
And cars made moan on their tracks
With a woe-filling sound.

The lamp-posts gleamed in the midnight
Thro the far-away street,
Where drunkards leaned in their vomit,
Keeping watch, as was meet!

There, slumberous lay this power,
Vastly sure of its pelf,
Except for skulking of thugs,
Squalid sluts—and myself!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

II.

THE NEXT MORNING.

Proud City, I see you are fair
With these grayish clouds and the mist
On broad-bosomed rivers and domes!

How amply you stand thro the haze
With forms of fair buildings outlined
Thro gold-yielding fog like a veil!

The gods whom my fathers drove out
Are surely returned—else how come
This marble and misery here?

The far-stretching avenues teem
With carriage and car of the rich,
With dignified manners and clothes!

Now up comes the sun over all,
White steam o'er the buildings shake out
Like incense ascending its rays.

Behold, what parade in the sun!
How stately and white are these structures!
How spick are these passers who pass!

The harlots and thugs of last night,
The beggars who hoarsely accosted,
Are they but a night-mare, proud City?

III.

PREPARATIONS.

And in the city of many men,
In one of the huddled tenements,
Upon its highest floor,
I moved with my belongings,
To watch my peculiar people,
To spread my net like a ward-heeler,
To make multitudes my friends,
To adjust my soul to the world's,
To prepare for further action;
And there I stayed thro the winter.

THE PAIN-YOUTH STRUGGLES IN THE CITY.

And round about me I nailed rude shelves,
I stocked them with many, many books,
The books I loved so well,
Hung up some skilful etchings,
And in the delight of beauty
I nursed my soul that it grow, flourish;
I made quite a few my friends,
And I studied my people with care;
I was fit, I thought, for action;
And thus I stayed thro the Winter.

IV.

WINTER-FEELING IN THE CITY.

The winter hurled itself upon the City,
Lashing itself in fury, right and left,
Filling the heart with fear and yet, with pity,
Like the world's outlaw, wild and sense-bereft,
Snarling and howling with a bitter whine;
And there, among the chilly tenements,
I waited, grumbling, watching for a sign,
With blowings on my frozen finger-nails
And listening to the voiceful cracks and rents
And combats in the flue of wrestling gales,
Raging like mine own heart when nought avails.

Who faints, who doubts, who muses, fearing cold,
Upon some snow-clad, vapor-breathing peak
Which makes the loneliness around it old
And wistful where the anxious eye can seek?
For even on the sunless ice, I thought,
Where chilly penguins nest with hugging wings
Something I know not what may yet be wrought!
And thus I nursed my spirit thro despair
And, gull-like, settling in uncertain rings,
I plunged again in something none would dare,
Until some cool defeat would be my share.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

V.

POPULARITY IN THE CITY.

And for me was the shouting!
And for me was the crowd!
For their favorite tried
Whom they trusted and knew
What a voice, what a soul,
What a roar and what madness!
Like a great-roaring wind it seemed!
Like a simply-loving older brother!
Cheer and cheer!
Roar and roar!
Huge-voiced, mighty!
From their midst went a roar of pain,—
All the earth's dormant-growing pain!
Roar! Roar! Roar!
Cursed be he who betrays you, oh crowd!
How the numberless upturning faces
Suffused me with pain for their pain!
Oh could I do something for them!
Oh what pain to divine all the world!
Crowd! Crowd! Crowd!
Roar! Roar! Roar!
Oh crowd! Oh pain!

VI.

FAILURE IN THE CITY.

Suddenly,
In the night,
I found myself at the head
Of a fiercely-crying mob
Of famished men who were wild;
And we swept the streets of "scabs,"
With bludgeons we dispersed them,
And the engines shrieked and dashed,
The cars were burst and derailed,
The police were swept aside,
Our fury none could withstand;
On, we rushed—the Great Man's house
Could not withstand our attacks;
When the door crashed down, I entered,
Bloodied,
Bare of head:

THE PAIN-YOUTH STRUGGLES IN THE CITY.

He wrote absorbed and secure
Tho he saw me there within:
"Well! Well! Young man!—Noble work!
Go ahead, tear down the walls!—
Or what do you wish to say?"
"Have you not enough to live on?
Why struggle on, grubbing gold?"
I exclaimed, impetuous;
He chuckled back in return,
"Have *you* not enough to live on
But you must burn and destroy?"
I was taken back, I paused,
Like one who's pitched into darkness.
"Have you reckoned well the world,
You sociological clerks?"
And he laughed again and cried,
"Young man, what force has unloosed
You and me upon this earth?
And do you know what you do?
And what functions we fulfill?
Go forth and learn of the world
And the hidden source of things,
The law of man and your place
Before you burn and destroy!"
There he sat and sneered and laughed;
Despising him, yet I paused;
The unwisdom of my course
Enveloped me like a flame
And I felt a hidden want.
"What terms give you?" I demanded.
"Not a farthing more give I!"
"Speak out," I said, "ere they enter!"
"Half they ask, and let them work!"

Hastily,
I rushed out—
They roared and roared in the night,
But I shook my head and cried,
"To your work again, oh men,
Altho his terms are a half!"
Then they murmured wolf-like deep
And some cried "Traitor!" and hissed,
Throwing stones, with curses, oaths,

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

And some went home, disappeared,
Some gave sickly cheers, seemed glad,
Till I was left all alone
And could feel the youth I was,
How something seemed to escape me;
I was void before a world
Looking
For relief!

VII.

SPRING-FEELING IN THE CITY.

When Spring came
I ached with the pain of my desire;
There I stood
And looked o'er the desert of tenements,
On the roof!

And I saw
The buildings of white, the proud white buildings,
Where they talked;
And loathing was in my sick, sick heart,
O what loathing!

O to take
A fall out of them! the glib new seers!
Who conjured
With "Art," with "Statistics," "Specimens,"
As with God!

Ah, for they
Had talked me from out my weapon, Faith,
Till I stood
As hollow as some old hornets'-nest;
Like themselves!

And I laughed
(Because of my numerous defeats)
And went down
To shake from my feet the City's dust,
And begone.

THE PAIN-YOUTH STRUGGLES IN THE CITY.

VIII.

LEAVING THE CITY.

And ere I left the hugely teeming City,
I came upon a mighty multitude
Assembled round the treaty-tables, where,
Two nations, having elsewhere warred and killed,
Thro delegates now patched a crafty peace.
And when the oily representatives
Had affably attached their signatures,
There rose from out the centre of the crowd,
With wild and dreadful laughter harrowing,
A prophet of my race, with angry brows,
Under which, like stars in cloud-rifts, flashed his eyes;
His brow was like a mighty shaft of light,
His beard was like the foaming cataract;
And mockingly and unafraid, he cried:

"So the Dwarf of the Flow'ry Islands hath finally dealt,
And behold, how the vast-limbed hector is lowly brought down,
Yet rejoices to run escaping with only a welt
And his boast is, Behold, no ransom pay I to the clown!
And you nations are muttering in the pride of your hearts,
Saying quaking, tho proud, What people are these who are yellow,
Speak strange speech, do not know our prophets nor mix in our
marts,
Learned not god-head of us, yet war as with us they were fellow!

And to hear ye, the prophet peals with calamitous laughter;
When his tears are agleam—because his hilarious humor—
He breaks out to the guilty nations in tones ringing after;
Oh ye nations, ye speak in pain of your terrible tumor;
For behold! are ye more than realms which were mighty before
you

Whom the Lord has snuffed out in tumult and darkness and fire?
That the Lord should exclaim to you "For your sins I adore you,
And the songs which I hated, *now*, are become like a lyre!"

Had ye followed your swaths of righteousness thro and had
harked,
Heard the sighs of the seer, beat swords into plough-shares nor
warred,

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

Armed no ships, wrought no brands and launched no lightnings
which marked

To these people the course to follow, ye feared not their horde!
At a breath from the west of justice they would have dissolved,
Lived your life, died your death—they were but a peaceable
people;

But from now, they are learning fast and your fates are involved!
Ye have done many ills, but lo! is not this one the deep ill?

Not for you, oh you nations, is it to be so astonished!

Not for you, oh you peoples, is it to be surprised!

(Many, many a time have you been of olden admonished

Be aware of the little people, the tribe long despised!

They shall gripe on your spirit, yea, on your heart and its strings,

Like a bolt light a light and fire your most brilliant of minds!)

World, oh world! hear you now no more how the message still
rings

That you sink to a law of leopards and wrestle like hinds!

Therefore, send now your smooth ones, send now your cozeners,
send

With the speed of the sped accelerate accents of love!

Yet I bid you to bow to words of the truth if you'd bend—

On the wind of sincerity shall you hasten your dove!

For behold! does the Lord require more than care of the truth?

That you walk in his way, be just, and of spirit that's pure?

For of old was the fruit of evil not evil, in sooth?

For the Lord is the same to-day and the same shall endure!"

And when I heard the man, I liked his word,

And made my way thro all the press of people

To gain the prophet's side, sustaining him.

But when they me beheld, there rose a cry,

A tumult and confusion far and wide,

All fighting hard to leave the spot in dread.

And then the old man gazed at me, surprised,

And grasped my hand, with kindling eyes, and said:

"Since all these fear you more than even me,

It is a sign you are the man to fear!"

So, laughing, I shook hands with him and thanked him,

Saying, "It is best I leave you now;

But I'll return and they shall listen yet!"

And, almost wild with bitterness, I left.

THE PAIN-YOUTH STRUGGLES IN THE CITY.

IX.

NEAR THE HARBOR.

There is a bond between us,
O tumultuous sea;
Something is wild within you
That is likewise in me!

Over this far-green vastness
I will push me a boat;
Piercing the misty horizon,
In the hidden I'll float!

Weird shall the sky be o'er me
And the sea soothed and still;
And I'll alone discover
And alone shall I thrill!

Rather, I'll strive in the wave-fray
(Than to slave with my kind)
Over the salt-sea vastness,
In the grip of the wind!

X.

PARTING LOOK.

How all their red-glancing windows flash!
How arrogant this array and dash
Of stately art!
What are you, then, unto me, O City,
That I can't root you with hate or pity
From out my heart!

Not wholly closed seems the lid of blue;
The western edge opens yet with hue
Of crimson spread,
As black, august, now the houses show
With slender steeples against the glow
Of saddest red.

SECOND HALF

CHAPTER VI.

THE STRUGGLER TAKES THE ROAD AGAIN

I.

ROAD-THOUGHTS.

How the city-din haunts me still!—
The shouting is yet in my ears!
And the tenements seem to fill
Me yet with their yearning and tears!

Of myself I am not rejected,
Tho I am rejected of men;
Nor will I be lightly deflected,
Tho I have to struggle again.

Tho ignored, myself was I ware;
Despoiled, I have carried away;
And from this and from that, I swear,
Is food for another fray!

II.

ROAD-MOODS.

To-day, I crushed a flower ere
I saw the lonely beauty stir
Its head beside me; oh, how long
It strove and strove ere I passed down!
How sure of life it seemed and strong
When earth but sported its renown!

Long have I watched this elegant,
Flamingo-colored cloud, whose bent
Seems to adorn one half the sky;
How nobly rich that dash of red!
But see!—a careless puff on high,
A breath, and all is broken, dead!

THE STRUGGLER TAKES THE ROAD AGAIN.

III.

ROAD-FEELING.

Shall I never escape you, oh pain?
On the sea-gull's high, misty flight,
In the vanishing crickets' refrain
 Faints and lures the heart-weary blight,
 Faints and lures the heart-weary blight!

Shall I never escape you, oh pain?
On the mountain-peaks old and hoar,
In the dying sun's flush o'er the plain,
 You are with me now as before,
 You are with me now as before!

Shall I never escape you, oh pain?
Or forever will you o'ertake me?
For I know that whatever you deign,
 You will either make or you'll break me,
 You will either make or you'll break me!

IV.

NEAR THE SEA.

Life to you, O powerful surge,
Tossing your spray in my face
And slapping on my chest,
With your salt breath
And infinite sound!
Embrace me dearly,
Huge-swinging water,
Far-away sea!

Take me, too, when you hurry back,
On-rushing waves who approach,
You answer to my want
Like a cool drink;
I joy in your grip,
Your mad embraces,
Wide-swinging water,
Far-away sea!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

Surely, *you're* the thing that I seek,
Manifold mother of moods,
Deep-hearted with no end,
With your great shriek,
Hilarious-high,
Intwined with longing,
All-swinging water,
Far-away sea!

V.

AT SUN-RISE.

Seemingly, I had wandered till the end,
And, wearied with the life-worn universe,
I sat upon the sea-shore in the night,
Gazing in the impenetrable gloom;
Upon the apex of the universe
I sat like one survivor of a flood.
Sleep did not come nor ever could, I thought;
And darkness seemed to hang on me and breathe
As tho I was the only thing that lived;
I feared myself as much as anything.
The air was cold and wind-blown and I shivered
As I heard the waves tumultuous
In murmur, whining like lost spirits who
Degrade themselves to fit their punishment
And utter hopeless vilenesses forever.

Unmoved, I saw how dimly, far away,
A light began to pale upon the gloom.
All the mad, turgid past seemed emptiness,
All seemed names, memories and nothing more—
Such things as old men mumble ere they go:
So lonely did I sit within the night!
I was like one who once had lived indeed,
But now was come an empty lone old age
When every day was like an evil gift,
So comfortless it was and full of pangs,
And likened—

Suddenly there shot beyond
Two vasty mellow beams as tho the sun
Was bent to raise himself upon the water;

THE STRUGGLER TAKES THE ROAD AGAIN.

Two naked arms reached out beyond the sea.
Then shot more rays until the water buoyed
A golden crown whose head was yet submerged,
While all the sea beneath its springing light
Showed furrowed calm and strength immeasurable.
Slowly rose the mighty sun, up, up,
Light-bursting, genial, ruddy, glorious;
As he lit up the thousand-eyed bright sea
Swelling so proud beneath his vast effulgence,
The beach grew golden-hued, and even I,
That chilly dawn, felt warming thro and thro:
Naked, I basked in his embracing rays,
His oldtime-loving, marrow-warming rays,
So full of warm assurance and delight!

The ruffles in my soul seemed smoothing out,
Altho my heart could never thaw, it seemed;
Again I watched him ruling splendidly
Over the flashing, moving, splendid ocean
Glittering with fire-flies in its waves,
Advancing sinuously to my gaze,
Coming, coming, rebuilding and dissolving,
Reborn again and rushing mightily
Against the sea-shore and salaaming fan-wise
In thin broad sheets of water on the sand,
Then, drawing backward, mystically laughing,
Spurring a swishing host of further onsets
With eddying in eddies, buoyant, free,
Fading away interminably still,
The white-caps bounding and delighting there
And revelling forever far and wide,
With odd far chords of strange unfinished song,
Rising and sinking, dying upon the edge
Of fairer promise, gurgling, strangling there,
Waking my pain again for its fulfillment.
Thus I sat there, long; too long, I think;
Altho the golden-hearted presence there
Seemed hard to part with, as I rose to go.

VI.

ROAD-MEETING.

And I met upon the lonely road
One who sat beside a Tree;

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

And, like torches in the night, his eyes
Burned beneath his shaggy brows;
From misshapen lips his mighty beard
Flowed with knotted branches down.
When I asked the Old One where he bode
He made answer mirthfully:

"Know ye not the tree, the bare-boughed tree?
Oh! I sit beside it daily!
You have heard about this tree and me!
Oh they talk about us gaily!
And they say, the heedless babblers say,
That my tree will blossom never,
And that I for nought am waiting, ay,
That my tree is dead forever!

"But they lie! the tree, my tree, will grow!
Spring is near, ye foolish ranting!
Ye will see my plant a wondrous show:
Ye will feel God's pow'r of planting!
From the old, the brave, maligned old tree,
Ye that laugh and ye the taunting,
Ye that scorned it will be fed, and ye
That had "feared" its death, half vaunting!

"Even all shall eat of its good growth,
For my heart is large in meaning!
Ye that mock, that fear, and that are loth
Will I bring with heat-felt beaming;
I who sit and starve and pine and peer
By this tree—while ye embitter
These my days with wilting, mirthful jeer
And your sharp, untimely titter!

"Night and day I sit and watch and wait,
Resting not to guard its resting,
Drinking not to give it drinking, mate
With the dark in all this trysting
While around me, raging in my ear,
Shrieking winds cry out in jeering
Till my spirit rocks with pain of fear—
Fear of failing, fear of fearing!

THE STRUGGLER TAKES THE ROAD AGAIN.

"There be some that say that this great trunk
Is with lighting deadly riven:
That its roots too lightly have been sunk
That its sap is now out-driven,
That this mighty tree is now too old
And its heart too full of tumors!
But I swear it king of all the wold
And that these be idle rumors!

"Nought but idle rumors, for I water it
With a mystic, wondrous water
Which must keep its strength forever fit
And defying Time's wide slaughter!
Thus my water keeps my tree! For ye
Have been told that when a drouhting
Shall parch up the land, then lo, my tree
E'en will save the craven doubting!"

When I sought to move him from the spot,
He, with madly-gazing eyes,
Cried, "*Fulfillment, hast thou come at last?
Have I waited not in vain
Till my beard imbedded with these roots?—
Yet, pass on, and we shall see!*"
Then my heart felt fears it knew not what,
And I fled his weird replies.

CHAPTER VII.
THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND
OF BEAUTY

I.

IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

And then I entered on a land
As silent as a pool,
With calm blue skies and regal trees,
Imperial and cool.

Birds chanted, singing yearningly,
Yet I saw none aloft;
Fair lanes there were, grass nobly kept,
Horizons far and soft.

A wistful country waited there,
Beneath some charm held fast;
Its silence as of woven song
I shattered with a blast.

Between the grass and sky above
I, only, moved and seemed
All ragged, bursting like rude day
On something sweetly dreamed.

So fair, so lonely-beautiful
It all appeared to me
As I strode coolly on, albeit,
Whistling warily.

II.

EVENING IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

Weary, I stood before great gates
By lions held, whence, lo! there came
A woman, nobly-hipped and tall,
And lithesome as a flame.
She smiled so wondrously at me,

THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

I felt ashamed beneath the goad
Of tattered strips and hanging rags
Worn out upon the road.

Her dark eyes shone on me like unto
Mystic seas when thro the clouds
The moon shines dim thereon; and like
Some one whom fortune crowds
And he has mind to stay and flee,
So all my panic thinking clashed
In wonder if to enter bold
Or turn away abashed.

I stood there dumb, with stolen looks
At her who archly smiled before,
Until I heard her voice, a thing
Of trembling sweetness, soar,
"Welcome, O Stranger, man of battles,
Seeking rest in my domain;
Here shall no Fury follow you
Nor any breath of bane."

I said, "I am The Struggler,
My Pursuer is Pain.
I'll stay with you until it
Drives me forth again."

She looked so deep into my eyes
My heart beat quick, my firmness fled;
She layed her thrilling fingers on
My naked arm, and led;
And in her odorous green park,
As starry night drew over all,
I followed where she led me, into
Her palace-hall.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

III.

MORNING IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

O what a morning,
Beautiful morning,
Rosiest morning,
 My love, my love,
You are adorning—
Possibly scorning?—
Ah, yes, adorning,
 My dove! my dove!

Ere I came striving,
Purposeful striving,
Wearily striving
 Upon this way,
How were you thriving?—
Wondrously hiving?—
Wayfarers driving,
 And thus, you say?

Beauteous eyes,
Dewiest eyes,
Mystical eyes,
 I see—I see—
Breast-heaving sighs,
Woman-replies,
Guileless and wise,
 For me! for me!

IV.

EAGLES IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

(She speaks)

Not like those fated moths who, entering
Some rainy night for shelter, burn themselves
About the flaming lamp they dote on, but
Like two imperial eagles pairing in
Their blissful nest upon some kingly summit
And gazing lightly on the world below,
So dwell we glorious together here,

THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

Tasting of the supreme delight of love!
And who dares whisper unto either 'Nay'?
What musty-hearted query can restrain us,
We who glow with youth exuberant?
Like shapeless clouds which hang persuasive on
The royal breasts of solid mountain-chains,
Imploring *them* to flow along, in vain,
So are such quakeries unto the proud
And supercilious fastness of our youth,
Embow'ed in arms of laughter-pealing love;
So, crested on our strong high-hearted love,
Regardless of the world in happiness
Even as we saw well the happy world
Did not regard us in our misery,
We nest together, leaving earth-pains in
The care of the high Gods who them create!

V.

SIESTAS IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

Nobly the swans sail across
The tremulous lake;
Idly thy head on my own
The calm doth partake.

Never, ere now, have I seen
Repose seem so fair;
Never white shoulder to make
So void every care!

Melting, our spirits embrace
In singleest love,
Fusing till even the hiss
Of snake cannot move;

Yea, and when lip touches lip
In passionate kiss,
Be what may be, fare what fare,
At least, *this* is bliss!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

VI.

MUSINGS IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

In the sunny morning,
As we sit, we two, and hear the birds, love,
Does not the world seem young?
Does not the world seem young?
"Yes, dear, the world seems young."

In the shadowed twilight,
As we watch the sunset, you and I, love,
Does not the world seem old?
Does not the world seem old?
"Ah, dear, the world seems old."

Ah, then, since we know not,
In the sight of this expiring sun, love,
Let us defy and kiss.
Let us defy and kiss.
"Dear, I defy and—kiss!"

VII.

PAIN THE MYSTERY.

Out from the flock of flying pigeons
Passively wheeling round and round,
One from the rest is swiftly speeding,
Ardently straining, freedom-bound!
(But you, heart, my heart?)

How I was startled in the orchard,
Musingly standing there to-day,
When, as from other worlds forgotten,
Suddenly swooped a hawk this way!
(But you, heart, my heart?)

Watching me mutely all the morning,
Just about speaking, he begun;
Now, on the gleaming, listless heaven,
Steadfastly gazing sinks the sun
And oh! heart! my heart!

THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

VIII.

BEAUTY TERRIFIED.

(She speaks)

Last night your mind wandered,
My beloved!
Now tell me, dear truant,
Why it roved.

The night was so tender
And I yearned—?
I surely must tease you
Till I've learned!

Oh, I do not doubt you!—
What an error!
But, feel—I'm unruly
And in terror!

But tell me, my dear one,
And its past;
Speak, did not you wander,
Night last?

IX.

SUNSET IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

We watched the great sun regally rule
With golden, vasty beams which held the heavens
Cloud to cloud upon their golden breadth,
And waited, both, until the daylight waned;
We thought the sun ne'er seemed so proudly sure
Of his wide reign nor ever seemed so ruddy;
Still, we wondered, seated on the ground,
Beholding how some amber cloudlets sped
Like heralds back and forth upon the calm
And splendid purple of the air, as tho
In bringing messages of hidden import;
And, sudden, even as we watched the sun,
It started, sank, no longer with a face

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

All boisterous and glowing far and wide,
But wearing now a deep, ill-tempered red.
We looked behind to see what caused his fall,
And there, behind us, ruling high as high,
Smiled down the crescent, calmly-floating moon,
A lady slender, pale, triumphant with
Unruffled softness of sure triumphing;
And then the sun-king glowered darkly up,
And on the moment was the boundless heaven
Peopled with a host of twinkling stars
Assembling round the queenly moon,
While numbers ventured to assail the edges
Of the sinking sun whose raging hues
Of black and red were marvelous to see;
And then the very clouds in serried columns
Pressed upon his grandeur, stifling him;
But still his beams cut thro their woolly midst
Nor would he lightly yield his fiery rule;
But still the suffocating clouds pressed on
While moon and all her joyous host of stars
Imperiously watched him sinking down
Into that sea from whence all-glorious
And lusty-arduous he rose at dawn;
And tho his ire and he were sunk indeed
Beneath the surface of the sea, his beams
Still lurked above his drowned head long, long,
Until, with one last burst of rich red anger,
He was lost, and left the moon supreme.

(She speaks)

"This was an epic of the skies, we saw;
It dwarfs the brawls of men to emmet-brawls;
But surely, oh my love, this thing's not sad!
Wherefore have you the guise of sorrow on?"

"Wherefore should I not sorrow, Beauty, since
Of old, my fathers bade both sun and moon
To hold their peace while they destroyed the foe;
But I gape here at nothing, like an ass,
While these do battle!"

(She.) "Come, let us return "

THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

X.

BEAUTY PIQUED.

(*She muses.*)

Ah, how my startled heart did leap to hear
The step behind that was not his, alas!
I stood with sharp sick longing, vexed, discouraged,
Smiling on the lawn with slender smile;
And then when I saw none upon the sward
But smiling Mercury arrived for news,
And watched the sun wane silently in gloom
And all the clouds move steadfastly upon
Their course to meet the eve, I thought, with pain,
How now, how now shall I appear before
The glorious company of gods, again,
To say, 'The mortal of that dreaded race
Eludes me scornfully and may escape!'
Am I, a goddess, to be thus defined?
Am I called Beauty and this thing shall be?

XI.

CRYING IN THE NIGHT.

I heard the woman sobbing in the night
And all the plaintive themes within the world
Seemed strangely quivering in her mystic voice,
A wistful symphony of grief.

The primal hunger of the mighty earth
And chaos pining for its ordered mate
Seemed calling in a shivering threnody
Of heart-relaxing woe.

Tumultuously rose her trembling voice
With curious accord of far-toned woe,
And sank like forest-sighs or ocean-plaints
With rhythmic shuddering.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

Entranced, I listened, thinking not nor breathing;
Awed was I within my guilty heart,
Ay, stupefied with guilt, as there I lay
And on my belly, hugged the night.

XII.

RECONCILEMENT.

The questioning look in her sad eye
For one brief flash as I passed by!
Why not have taken her fair hands
And kissed the nobly-smiling lips,
Making her mine with loving bands,
Rather than pass like mist-bound ships?

Thus, on the wings of my desire,
Like music floating from a lyre
I faltered to her side that night,
And there were kisses passionate
And sobbings smothered in delight,
And Beauty laughed, and ruled me yet!

XIII.

BEAUTY PLEADING.

(She speaks.)

Once the moon, they say, dear,
Was one with the sun,
But they went their way, dear,
To shun and be undone!
You are my sun and I, your moon;
Since in my clouds I pine and swoon
Shall not we both be one on high,
You and I!

Low, yestreen, there lay, dear,
The crane with its strain,
Ebbing there away, dear,
So fain to love, yet slain!
Oh the poor crane smote from above!
Forever torn from joy of love!
Ah, let's be true since woe's so nigh,
You and I!

THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

And to-night there lurks, dear,
A sound from a mound,
As tho death now works, dear,
Profound upon his round;
Again I open arms to you;
Come, be caressed in love—we two;
Ah, let two *live* beneath the sky,
You and I!

XIV.

THE STRUGGLER APPRISED.

Ill at ease,
I wandered in the stillness of the woods,
Breaking the vinous growths which clasped my feet
In their imploring tendrils on the ground;
Further and further from the Pleasure-house
Where Beauty, well-beloved, and I were dwelling,
I pushed my way, persistent, musing deeply;
And a locust sang thro the woods.

On and on,
Thro all the mystic, trackless whispering,
The strange commotion of the mighty trees,
The baffling life which circled round my form,
The knowledge uttered round my stupid feet—
Was that a face I saw there? surely not—
Thro all some thing escaped me all the time
(And a locust sang thro the woods).

As I went,
I found myself all-suddenly amazed,
Looking upon a clearing full of light;
There was a skurrying of many forms
As, furious, I sprang into their midst;
And one eluded not my eager hand;
I caught him by his wet and hairy throat
(And the locust hushed in the woods).

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

"Satyr, speak!"

He struggled fiercely but my hand was tight;
He tried to answer and the blood and spit
Rushed out upon my arm from nose and throat;
I loosened grip upon the filthy being—
He was a satyr, I could see it plainly—
But still he spat and choked but would not speak
(And the call ran thro the woods).

"You can speak,"

I cried, "and you shall never leave my hand
And be among your fellows, save you do!"
His bat-like eyes stuck out in agony,
He gasped and twitched his goat-like, pointed ears,
And soon gasped out, "Wait—hold—I iconoclast,
I'll tell thee all if thou wilt let me go!"
(And the locust hushed in the woods).

And he grinned,

"You're in The Country of the Fallen Gods—
The gods your idol-hating sires struck down!
Here came we all of us and hid us here,
Biding our time to rule the earth again!
Go, hasten, publish it and arm your people—
Our glorious dwelling comes again on earth!"
(And the sound murmured thro the woods).

And I said,

"Unclean on, who is Beauty, what is she?"
And as he wriggled from my grasp, he squealed,
"She is our chief purveyor, mighty one!
Has she not tied you hand and foot? Ay, you?
Hamshakled head to heel lies all your nation!"
He said and grimaced, frolicking away
(And the locust sang thro the woods).

Then I saw,

Those idols were not wooden, that they lived,
That those were living things my fathers fought,
And they were come again, and I was warned;
And as I hastened, musing, back again,
There followed fauns and satyrs mimicking
Who round me hopped; but my resolve was made
(And the locust ceased from the woods).

THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

XV.

THE STRUGGLER'S BLAST IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

When I came from my hunt, I found
On the marble ground,
Fast asleep, with dishevelled hair,
She was lying there!

In the fountain the water sparkled
But the evening darkled,
Birds still sang with a sad sweet trill
And my heart ached still.

And like maidens each fluted column
Waited mute and solemn;
And I saw that her lids were red
And my greeting fled.

Red the sun in the fountain shone
When I tried the tone
Of my horn with a mellow blast,
Thinking, 'tis the last!

And the sunshine fled the water,
To her eyes it sought her,
And she stirred with the old surprise,
With her sweet surmise.

XVI.

THE PARTING WITH BEAUTY.

(*Beauty*)

"Oh heart! my heart!
Thy gaze affrights me, oh beloved!
What art thou thinking, my beloved!
Thou piercest all my spirit now!
Why is it all thy thoughts seem wandering
Whene'er I sing to thee, my love, my love!
Oh, oh, my love, I cannot bear it thus!
Thou hast taken captive thy captivity!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

Oh mighty-hearted! place thy fingers here,
Over my heart, and feel it burn, burn, burn!
Wilt leave me? See how every wind doth blow
My streaming hair about us both, my love!
Sun shines, birds sing, leaves rustle—all for us!
Oh love that was, warm love, where hast thou fled!
I feel this is the last! Oh breaking heart!
Oh Pain, Pain, Pain!"

(The Struggler)

"Oh noble-beauteous! oh peerless one!
Oh pleading lashes! wonder-darkened eyes!
Oh warm, familiar hair! oh tearful face!
So sad is it to take and not to give!
I cannot stay, oh dulcet-worded one!
Did I not tell thee there's a mighty fire
Within me, roaring for colossal fuel?
I am of a Chosen People,
Our law is a law of fire;
From the right hand of our Lord
Runs a law of Pain and Struggle!
I cannot stay, thou fair, thou lovely thing!
The sun, the birds, the leaves, are calling me;
They have been chiding in my ear long, long!
I must go forth, forth, forth, thou clinging one!"

XVII.

A SONG WHICH THEY SANG TOGETHER.

What has come unto love,
What has befallen us,
That we're struck from above!
Were we too happy thus?
The Pursuer has sought
And searched us out, at last!
Even here are we caught,
Astonished at his blast!

THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

Sad-eyed eve, sobbing morn!
Strange seeking, constant pain!
Struggle's bred, power's born
From yearning half in vain!
Mystic Pain, strong Decree
Who tearest us apart,
Hating thee, fearing thee,
We sink before thy art!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STRUGGLER SEEKS IN THE DESERT

I.

IN THE DESERT.

Like to the mighty-heaving side
Of some great monster couched beside
I'm wrapped around, oh solitude,
By your deep breathing, still as death,
And silence of such mighty breadth,
I feel you're waiting to be wooed,
Oh solitude!

Words, words! Where in the music can
Extol you, touch you, bless or ban!
You have a voice, oh solitude,
In which all mighty have been blent
Majestic, potent, continent,
Forever greatness thus to brood,
Oh solitude!

Oh living silence heard apace!
I stretch my arms to you and space—
I now accord you your own mood!
Your presence in my senses pours—
Oh take me now, for I am yours,
You primal, mighty-breasted nude!
You solitude!

II.

DESERT-LONGING.

Tell me, O desert, is it not here,
That the Strugglers of olden,
The Painmen of my people,

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

The saviours of souls,
Came and brooded,
Grew to manhood,
Saw their visions,
Their self-hood enlarging
With storing of their souls
Full of self-rearing tasks?
Tell me, O desert,
Is it not here?

Desert, my bowels yearn for your secret!
I will go thro your harshest,
Eat locusts and their honey,
For I'm in despair;
Maybe *you* have,
Maybe *you* hide,
What I seek,
The tally to my longing,
The struggle to my pain,
Or the herb for my madness!
Desert, my bowels
Yearn for your secret!

III.

DESERT-WANDERING.

Lo, I have wandered far and I thirst;
The burning sands bloat my feet;
Caked with harsh dust's the tongue which at first
Rang challenge, sheer, brazen, fleet
To the unfolded haps of my way!
No thing, no sign, not a flower
Cheering the eye or easing the day
By mellowing any hour;
Naught but still sands stretched far, ah, how far!
Beyond, the stark, faceless sun
Crouched like a beast to spring and to mar
A man already undone. . .

IV.

DESERT-FURY.

You shall not forever elude me, oh Pain!
I will track in your deserts,

THE STRUGGLER IN THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

In your sickliest deserts,
For your source I will search,
I will seek, I will find
Where you hide, where you brood
In your poppy dominion,
In your dankest retreat,
Demon-angel seraphic,
World-worn sphinx ruling long,
Moulding earth to your two-fold likeness,
Partly angel and partly demon,
By your hair will I seize you,
By your tawniest locks,
With my sword will I slay you,
With my sun-glancing sword,
I'll dissever your body,
Roll the demon and angel
Down the ravines of time—
Since apart you endure not,
Since apart you ne'er dwell—
Behold! if I find you, I'll slay you, oh Pain!

V.

DESERT-CONTRITION.

Mighty Mother, pardon!
Pardon, Mother Pain!
All I am, hope to be,
This thing, myself, I owe to you.
Behold: I now acknowledge it!
Pardon your son his sore wild words
With anguish uttered, Mother Pain!
Shall I wake thoughts for one who's dead?
Shall I not keep life-thoughts with me?
I want to struggle on your own terms!
World-ruling Pain, who knows your ways?
Since it is so, it must be so;
What you are, you must be;
Mighty Mother, pardon!
Pardon, Mother Pain!

THE STRUGGLER SEEKS IN THE DESERT.

VI.

DESERT-SECRET.

What have you whispered into my ear,
Violet sky-hues,
Wonderful desert!
All are the ministers of the sense
Sent by eternal
Currents of the Pain?
All a mirage, life and death, time, space,
Shadowy fictions,
All ruling dyes?
All are forms of pain, pain-and-struggle,
Primal illusions,
Mightiest minions?

Only for your great sake, pain-and-struggle,
Life seems and death seems,
Time rules and space rules?
Reflex eternal, one from the other!
Naught are beside you!
All else are your forms!

VII.

THE STRUGGLER DISCOVERS.

I.

Can it be!
For I see you mean well
By me, Pain,
That you'd make and not break!

For I see
Pain is all, all is Pain;
Tho its forms
Seem to sway, they obey!

II.

All's alive with Pain;
Does not earth know its pain?
And the earth-quake shows
It has belly-aches, too.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

Pain's the heart of life
And its reflex is struggle;
'Tis the law which none
Can do aught but obey.

III.

Yea, this sand, tho the lowest,
Is alive, knows its Pain—
See it slip thro my fingers!
And this stone is alive—
If I pound overmuch,
Doesn't it break from its pain?

Lo, the pain of the universe!
'Tis the Lord God himself!
And his struggle is in the planets,
And in man and his deeds!

Lo, the laws of the universe
Show the ways that it always
Responds to the pain of God,
For Pain-Struggle is God!

VIII.

THE STRUGGLER'S SONG IN THE DESERT.

I glanced at the Hunters of Curios,
The qualmless Seers-in-Statistics,
Pain-lacking!

Over and over again they noted,
They fingered their bauble,
Pain-lacking!

On their desert they sat and fingered it,
The Rhapsodists straining to lift it,
Pain-lacking!

They sat stupidly looking at it,
They sat foolishly fumbling with it,
Till I, till I, arose!

I, the Struggler,
The Son of the Struggling-Nation,
Till I came up!
Till I, the Struggler,
Till I came along!

THE STRUGGLER SEEKS IN THE DESERT.

Over my shoulder I looked, I glanced,
Over my shoulder I gazed!
And I saw them sitting and standing around,
And their curio in their midst, I saw!
And I saw their trifle
And swiftly remembered my pain
(This they call intuition!)
And I remembered my pain,
My world-old pain,
I remembered it,
And suddenly I snatched the thing,
In their midst I picked it up—
It had been waiting for me!

Like the heart among the limbs,
I gave it meaning,
I saw its uses (how it tallied to my pain)
I gave it vision and beauty and truth,
I kissed it and transfigured it
And slung it over my shoulder,
Together with my trophies!
Over my shoulder I slung it
To hurl it as a relic,
As a sacrifice,
As an offering
To the God of my fathers!

IX.

HYMN TO PAIN-STRUGGLE.

I would sing a hymn to you, O Pain,
I am filled with you!
Accept a psalm of me, O Pain,
I would worship you!
Pain! Pain!
Vasty Pain!

What have you not done for me, O Pain!
For you breathed on me
In raging winds, in sighing trees,
In the thoughtful skies,
Pain! Pain!
Sacred Pain!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

In the leaf-like Autumn clouds you spoke,
Yea, your words were there,
And in the crafty far horizon
You watched me, Pain!
Pain! Pain!
Constant Pain!

Like a captive eagle in a palace
Did my fathers' spirit
Shriek in Beauty's pleasure-house,
Till you freed me, Pain!
Pain! Pain!
Saving Pain!

In the arms of my enchantress, there
You discovered me,
You dragged me struggling forth again
And restored my soul!
Pain! Pain!
Mighty Pain!

And I sought to lose you in the desert,
In despair I came,
But you came after! here we met
And you made me strong!
Pain! Pain!
Mystic Pain!

Let the mountains from their bases spring
With a mad desire,
They cannot reach your praise, O Pain,
O they cannot, Pain!
Pain! Pain!
Highest Pain!

Life-and-death, time, space, they minister
To your awful Will,
They are the forms which you put on,
Only instruments,
Pain! Pain!
Ruling Pain!

THE STRUGGLER SEEKS IN THE DESERT.

Let the belly of the sea heave up,
Let it leap and rise
And reach the concave sky, O Pain,
You it cannot reach,
Pain! Pain!
Viewless Pain!

Lo, I shudder to behold you, Pain,
Being infinite;
I seek to praise you from my heart
For it knows you best,
Pain! Pain!
Awful Pain!

X.

DESERT-TEMPLES.

Here, in the desert,
I, The Iconoclast,
The Struggler,
The Son of Pain,
Now build me
A temple.

All men may worship,
Worshipping if they can;
If not, then
They still must struggle
Within them—
I'll teach them.

For I have learned
That the iconoclast
Destroys not,
He's no destroyer;
He even
Builds Mankind.

Hence, now I build
Temples incalculable;
Each being
Having a desert
To build in
And worship.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

XI.

DESERT-TEST.

Once, in the making of a man, I see,
There steals into his soul
Qualms if there's aught he can,
Doubts if there's aught but dole;
Till every thought of ruth,
Of conscience, hope or truth,
Seems slipped away like sands
And desert-void he stands—
Once, in the proving of the prophet!

Then, in the making of the man, I see,
He wins back one by one
Faith that there's somewhat he can,
Dreams of what *may* be done,
And finds him deeper laws,
And more with pain he draws,
Till on his desert sands
Again all these he stands—
Thus, in the proving of the prophet!

XII.

THE STRUGGLER'S VISION.

And after these things
When the Lord had appeared to me in Pain-Struggle,
I stood alone within the desert
And the stillness was tremendous;
And my soul declined within me.

And there, as I stood,
On the desert unrolled itself an old parchment,
An ancient covenant unrolled;
And there called a Voice and named me,
And I whispered, "Lord, here am I."

And then cried the Voice,
Son of Man, speak, what dost thou see?
And I said, "Lord, a covenant."
Behold! said the Voice, I kept it!
Ay, but doeth so my people?

THE STRUGGLER SEEKS IN THE DESERT.

Go, therefore, to them;
In my Name shalt thou speak and say,
The hollow of mine hand hath kept them,
Thro the storm I kept them safely;
Shall they not fulfill my message?

And falteringly
I said, "Lord, I am weak; and faith has evanished."
And loudly answered me the Voice,
In pain and in Struggle I sought thee
That thou bring that faith to mankind!

Go, therefore, in haste,
For the Land languisheth without its own People,
And man without his ancient faith!
And lo, I awoke that instant;
And my struggle lay before me.

CHAPTER IX.

THE STRUGGLER RETURNS WITH THE
PROPHECY OF FULFILLMENT
I.

NEW MEETING.

When I had pulled out from the Land of Beauty
Like a fly from sweet jam,
Behold, one came up on the roadway
I had met in my youth.

It was and was not and I marveled greatly—
It was he at the truce
Who prophesied peace and of justice
In the man-teeming Town.

It was and was not and I marveled greatly—
It was he who kept watch
Alone by the tree on the roadside
With his mad-loving eyes.

Behold, when at last he came up, I saw him;
He was glorious-browed!
His raiment was fragrant with springtime,
Like a dove was his beard.

His shoulders were stooped like the modest mountains
Lest they brush with the stars;
And from their long pockets, his eyes
Gazed like vigil-set lamps.

I trembled and rose, I ran forth to meet him;
We embraced, we embraced;
"My son, I was waiting for you
Tho you did not foresee!

"When you were but young I was ever with you,
In your musings was I.
Are you not aware I was with you
In the heat of your thoughts?

STRUGGLER RETURNS WITH PROPHECY OF FULFILLMENT

"Behold, now my tree is in fragrant blossom
And its fruit is relief;
Because of the charm you have broken
Now the waters are loosed.

"My name has been Peace and they had no knowledge;
But your sign shall be deeds;
No more on my name shall they call;
Yours the vigil shall be.

"And now, be you called after me, Fulfillment;
Go, my son, and fulfill."
He bent and he kissed and embraced me;
And I opened mine eyes.

II.

NEW VISION.

When I think that life is a battle,
And the soul a flower of pain,
All the taunts of defeat seem but tattle,
Every wound the pledge of a gain.

And I rise with the birds in the morning
And I stare amazed at the world;
And aside from the praising and scorning,
It becalms my querulous soul.

And whatever I meet seems astounding,
'Tis the picture-part of the fray,
E'en like time and like space all surrounding,
So the world to pain on its way.

Then the fears from my heart are evanished,
And the cares which ride on my mind
Are lik' meadows of gnats which are banished
By the rough, the north-snorting wind;

For it means to be happy and cheerful
To fulfill all-furthering pain,
Since in wars that are stagnant, tho fearful,
And in peace that lags is there bane.

Wherefore, I, looking up in this heaven,
I exult; I, too from this fane,
From this infinite source which is given,
Can fulfill my measure of pain.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

III.

NEW DEVICES.

Up on high,
In the pure far heavens,
I saw a speck and watched it,
And I saw it was an airship,
And mine eyes rejoiced to see it.

And I thought
Sending up a message,
A greeting to the flier,
And the God of Struggle
Who devised the airship, told me,
"Flash your Sword!" and lo, I did so;

And the Brand
Caught the sun in flashes,
In telepathic lightnings,
And they reached the flier;
To the earth he darted quickly,
Springing out, he ran and met me.

And I gazed
At his craft and liked it,
And he admired my Sword-blade,
Asking many questions,
And he said, "It is the rarest
I have seen; where go you with it?"

And I said,
"Tis the Sword Thought-Struggle;
It's power is all power,
And to take the City
Do I go this day and also
To make good an ancient struggle."

Then he said,
"Let me go with you
And I will sail upon it
Where your sword will reach not;
I'll bombard it with my cannon,
But you shall have the credit!"

STRUGGLER RETURNS WITH PROPHECY OF FULFILLMENT

Then I laughed
Till the tears were started;
And he became offended,
My obliging comrade,
And I hastened to assure him
And explain where lay the humor:

"And I said,
This my Sword flies further
Than your machine can travel;
It is surely faster,
And its canons more commanding—
For they even made your airship."

Then he rose,
And he said, "I see it!
But now I'll mount my airship
And we'll see who's first there!"
This he said, and in a moment
He was up and speeding thither.

He was wrong:
For before he started
My lightning Sword flew thither,
By the might thought-struggle
Did I speed away before him
And the City lay before me.

IV.

NEW ENCOUNTERS.

I.

As I journeyed, swinging the Sword of my Cunning,
And hastening to the nearing City,
Came a man, a paunch, with the greasiest smiling,
And said, "Why shorten your days with struggle?"

"Look at me; I'm forty and fat and am living;
I eat the best of the best, shun worry;
I will be two hundred years old, like my father,
I eat and sleep, and betide whatever!"

Then I rose—not slowly—and pressed to his belly
My Sword, and cried, "Were you not sent hither?
Run away, O turtle beloved of the decades,
Keep safe your dirt!" and he turned and paused not.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

II.

And as I paused with the Sword on my knee,
There came a man who was black;
His lips were thick and his skull was no less,
But he was shy, which I liked.

"Therefore, I smiled, and he grinned and approached,
And, suddenly, he kneeled down,
And seized my hand and he bellowed aloud,
"I suffer! help, or I die!"

Lo, then my heart full of pity was smote;
But none the less I replied,
"My brother, offer your thanks to the Lord
Because at last you know Pain!"

III.

And as I hastened to the City-gates,
Ran a youth to me,
And clutched my hand as he fell
And, exhausted, gasped:

"Your fame has reached me, Prophet, and I come,
I forsake mine own;
My nation and my family
I have cast behind!"

Then I, "Rise up, return to those you left!
For 'twere better you
Had left your eyes than yours desert!"
And he stood amazed.

"Did you imagine life was lightly fought?
'Tis not easy, son;
'Tis marvellously hard for him
Truly fighting it.

Your nation and your family, are they
Not your very eyes?
Thro them as thro yourself, my son,
Is your gaze on man!"

The stripling stood with lowering brow, and said,
"I obeyed my heart."
"Well done; and now, enlarged, return."
And he wept and went.

STRUGGLER RETURNS WITH PROPHECY OF FULFILLMENT

V.

NEW DISCIPLES.

In the bright morning
Disciples came to me, and they were eager,
They were all youngsters.

And they cried, "Prophet,
O teach us what the greatest taught to worldlings!"
"What was taught worldlings?"

Then they grew large-eyed
And answered, "Pity, love, self-sacrificing,
These they taught worldlings."

And I spoke, answering,
These serious disciples, eager and cleanly,
In the bright morning:

"These I teach seldom,
For I distribute seed, not ready fruit,
Save to young children."

Then they asked, wondering,
"What is your seedling, Master; and what virtues
And what use has it?"

"Pain's the seed," I answered;
From Pain is struggle, knowledge, love and pity;
All the rest follow;

Yea, they flow dripping,
Like drops which overflow a fountain when
It is full-flowing."

They were startled hearing,
But they were likely youths, and they went onward
In the bright morning.

VI.

ON THE ROAD, NEAR THE CITY AGAIN.

And whom should I upon the roadway meet
But my old painter-friend! "Where bound?" he cried.
"I'm going to the City, now, to call

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

My people to their land, and man to faith."
Then he let out in boisterous guffaws.
My soul beheld and was not pleased thereat.

"So you are going back!" he cried, at last.
"Oh, no! not back, but forward," I replied.
"Remember, friend of mine, the world is round."
And then I saw he had grown rather sleek;
I saw his pictures had applause, at last;
He reeked success which pleased me not, he knew.

Therefore, he talked and talked, like someone fevered,
Or a thief who's pounced on in his shame.
Silent, I went beside him, listening,
And brooding much on divers mysteries.
And at the meeting of our several roads
Where our ways crossed, we parted, he and I.

CHAPTER X.

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY

I.

BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

Listen, O imperious City!
For the Lord God who sent me is not less imperious;
And he waits for his answer.

Save I was sent, I could not have come;
Wherefore, then, do you raise the brow of surprise
And question me with strange looks?

For as the Lord was, so he remains;
And at his own appointed time
He speaks thro his appointed prophets.

Here have I come in your midst,
Even in the thick of your thunderous traffic,
In the presence of your mighty skyscrapers!

The voice of my mission shall pierce this multitudinous din,
And mingle with the hydraulic rattling against the steel girders,
And be not lost among the tumult of your swift cars.

It shall find you out where you are barricaded
In your improved modern dwellings of marble,
Where you thought the Lord shut out, at last!

It shall seek you out in your busy offices,
In the huge cafe's swarming with diners,
Ay, and in the numerous teeming tenements!

It shall pierce thro it all from end to end!—
Till the business of my master is heard
And his message fulfilled!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

II.

THE LAW OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

I.

In the beginning there was pain, pain, pain;
And from the infinite stretches of pain
And its recurring reflexes in struggle
Was I begotten and all things which were begot.

What was I not!
Spawn of the pain of ages,
Shot from the throes of earthquakes,
I strove and strove and strove.
Now, what can I not be?
Burnt to fore-knowledge by Pain,
Wakened by Pain unto its worship,
I struggle and struggle.

In the remembrance of pain I learned,
(For the source of all knowledge is pain)
Shivering when I saw a mongrel drenched
And swift surmising the far-away stars.

II.

Pain, my brothers, is all;
And the reflex from pain is struggle,
And the reflex from struggle is pain, again.

III.

The flower, because of its pain, flowereth;
It has the will to struggle.
The tiger, because of its pain, springeth;
It has the will to struggle.
The soldier, because of his pain, fighteth;
He has the will to struggle.
The merchant, because of his pain, bartereth;
It answers his will to struggle.
The artist, because of his pain, draweth;
It answers his will to struggle.

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

And the prophet, because of the pain of all of these, united in
him, which paineth,
Goes forth, haranguing men, till his throat is raw and hoarse,
his mind like a city besieged and his heart
smokes in ashes—
Because of his will to struggle.

IV.

Self is the unit of sensitiveness.
It is the world; all form its vast life.
They of the small self live in a small world,
They of the large self live in a large world;
The feeling of another's pain is "love;"
The call of man's enlarged self is "duty."

V.

He with the quick-stabbing dirk
His is the small struggler's self,
Showing his pain's stimulus.
So far; but it may go further.

In the enlarged struggler's self
Dwells all the world; he's the world.
He does not live for his fellow—
Only because *he's* his fellow.

VI.

Where's the shame in the self-essence,
Growing large in its pain-combats,
With embrace spreading inclusive?

All is poured into the selfhood,
And the soul swims in its selfhood,
And it is bounded by selfhood.
Well, what then? May not it spread?
For it grows larger and larger
And expands, circling creation.

'Twill expand joining past to present
And connect present and future
And defeat death-rule and time-rule.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

VII.

Who is he that can live "for himself alone?"
I cannot live for myself alone;
Who is he that presumes to live "for others?"
I do not live for others.

But behold, this my selfhood's so enfolding
That all the world dwells within me;
Naught occurs but 'tis part of me myself,
The world and I are the same.

VIII.

I will tell of a thing that's rich with humor,
Oh, ay, it was too funny;
To the desert I went to be alone—
And all the world came along!

Never before did I have such crowds companions.
Or such a host to speak to!
And my pain, which I sought to quiet there,
Kept answering to the world's.

IX.

I see how it surges,
How the Struggle is furious raging,
How the blood of the nations rolls on,
Producing its warriors:

I see that the savage,
Hunting heads, slaying men, women, children,
He was not a monstrosity, standing
A challenge to God-head:

I see that each conflict
Is a source of a higher standard of struggle;
That the conflict abates not but presses
To-day more than ever:

I see that it never
Could be other, that justice itself
Is an attribute come from the struggle,
And wisdom, like justice.

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

X.

Who told you to boast that
They are opposites, Warfare and Wit,
Strife and Wisdom, the Arts and the Sword,
Which are all akin?

Thro all of the ages,
Thro all wars, murders, crimes, this is law,
That the Struggle increase waxing greater;
Save this, there was nothing:

The God of All-Struggle
Has no fondness for "life" more than "death"
Nor has fondness for "death" more than "life"
Nor aught but Pain-Struggle.

XI.

How the Prophets assembled round Pain-Struggle!
What they called the pride of the wicked
Was their callousness toward Pain;
When they said the meek are the bless'ed
It was those responding to Pain;
When they cursed those working oppression
'Twas for free expression of Pain;
When they vowed in deep-hearted knowledge
(For they struggled best with their Pain)
"He chastiseth whom the Lord loveth"
Was it not the praising of Pain?
How the Prophets assembled round Pain-Struggle!

XII.

The "wicked" are least
In the Struggle, the "just" struggle most;
For a monarch must needs watch his realm,
A slave but his life:

XIII.

Think you, peace is coming;
Come, imagine all fed, clothed and housed;
Do you think men will dance, knowing "peace,"
And Pain will vanish?

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

Continuous action
Is the only fulfillment of pain;
He alone knows The Peace who can turn
Longing into doing.

XIV.

There is no flesh
And there is no spirit;
There is less struggle
And there is more struggle:

The clod, the tree
And the living beast
All struggle too,
For there is no death:

Should you be asked,
What is man? then say,
Of all that struggle
He's the greatest struggler:

XV.

What is it the mesmerist sees
That he's awed by the trance?
And what is the nature of sleep
Which is kin unto death?

Behold, 'tis a degree of struggle—
'Neath one struggle another:
And sleep is a lesser-shown struggle
Which is under the outer:

Subconsciousness is the remains
Of a struggle outstripped;
'Tis something that once was the outer
But which Pain has retired.

XVI.

The Struggler does not fight
At the drop of the hat:
His shoulder bears no chip
Tho he's pushed in a crowd:

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

He does not hound his foes—
'Tis the way of the low—
The Struggler's mien is mild:
He is called Man of Peace.

What many call most dear
He surrenders with ease,
But for the things that count
He will stand, he's a rock.

XVII.

Lovely to me are the furrowed faces,
The faces of pain,
Speaking of hardly-contested struggles,
Of heavy cares.

Dear to my heart are their cheerful humors,
Their language sweet,
And their fore-knowledge speaks plain in glances,
Their anger is awful.

What are to me all the prim void faces,
What owe I to them?
But unto all that have suffered, struggled,
I owe a debt.

XVIII.

From the reflexes of Pain in Struggle
And from Struggle in Pain again,
Is the appearance of all phenomena.

And tho these phenomena be unreal,
The pain and struggle which begot them
And the pain and struggle which they, in turn, beget,
They are certainly real.

XIX.

I speak of the Universal God of Struggle
Who makes all the planets respond to his pain,
And the mouldy earth *travail* with insects, plants,
And all forms of life.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

The earth in its struggles does wonders and wonders,
It labors and brings to the light what it can;
I would fain call earth a brother unto me—
Does not pain make kin?

XX.

Behold, how the pull of the earth-pain draws
Its spawn to its bosom, like man to man,
With the same great tug which hermits in their caves
Feel, willing or no!

The action of pain and its struggle is all—
'Tis love, for the lovers but seek to imbue
One another with their pain (they both respond
To their will to struggle.)

I heard in the yards of the city, at night,
The cats wail and fight in their primitive tryst,
And I felt Pain-Struggle in its mighty rule
Of the universe.

The struggle from love-pain brings progeny forth,
The reflex of pain gives its motion to planets
And its tug is in the heart of stars and all
Their automata.

XXI.

The arts are expressions of pain and its struggle,
But pictures and statues and music conduct,
They're conductors, too, and carry pain to man,
And beget more struggle.

The things which compel one to struggle to-day
Are not what make up to a struggle to-morrow,
For accomplishment gives birth to newer pain—
Growth is part of Pain-Struggle.

Think you that the struggle is less since the time
Of spear and of axe and the grass wet with blood?
'Tis become to-day far greater than before;
And not great enough.

All virtues whatever but widen the struggle;
The prophet extends him his battle-line further,
Like a general who spreads the army's wing,
So, with more to grapple.

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

XXII.

And are you alarmed at all the excesses of Pain?

Have you misgivings?

Then remember that pain's nature is pain;

Pain is pain's nature.

Its currents of struggle flow on their way,

Tho no one sees them;

But thro their appointed ruts they progress,

For here death rules not.

XXIII.

The powerful wish to be, to live,

The lengthening ache to love, be loved,

To follow the blissful stroke, beauty,

To hide from you, great servant, death,

All these are thralls of pain

Which serve the Will to Struggle.

Well done! good and noble thralls, well done!

I praise you because I know your place:

For you are accursed of them that name

You masters of the house;

They, fawning, mingle curses!

XXIV.

Hear me, I say there is no "will to live"

But there is a will to struggle;

Suicides laugh to scorn this "will to live"

But obey the will to struggle.

Strugglers who love their life, their country, friends,

Sweep the sheaf of spears within them,

Under the elephant they freely die;

None shall choke the Will to Struggle.

XXV.

All creeds are attempts to account for Pain:

Some nations, in answer, made war with swords,

And some made attempts to root it out,

Some tried to evade it in subtle thought.

I am of a powerful people, aye,

They winked not at Pain to forget it,

But gave it the highest of places high;

And thus have I learned Pain-and-Struggle.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

XXVI.

Decades alone would make a seer of a turtle,
But men are old or young, wise or foolish, in proportion to
their experience of pain.
Nations are old or young, civilized or uncivilized in proportion
to the intensity of their national experience and
their sensitiveness to pain.

XXVII.

Do you doubt because a soldier may slay a saint,
A churl pull an old man's beard,
A Struggler die from a rusty nail,
And armies of soldiers encompass a nation of prophets?

Do not doubt; all this has happened and, nevertheless,
The nation of prophets rule,
The greater Strugglers are not denied;
Invisibly leading, their hand is lying on mankind.

XXVIII.

What has happened to the good old man, that he is "dead?"
Disproportion in his pain and struggle, that brought "death."
Death is the reflex of the final pain in unseen struggle
continuing invisibly onward.

XXIX.

Only the feebler struggles
Are perceptable by the senses;
Could you see the swift gyrations of the wheel?
No, only the slow.

Thus is the struggle called "spirit"
Mightier than the stroke of the sword;
And the nation you thought was crushed,
Rules the world.

XXX.

Faith is the subconscious instinct for Struggle—
Transcending all vicissitudes,
Unquenched by woes of the present,
Insistant in the teeth of "death;"
Religion should make that instinct conscious faith.

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

XXXI.

All things are in the dynamic flux of Pain and Struggle eternally active;
The relativity strangely ruling mankind's vision
Because of this flux dynamic,
Is relative pain and struggle.

All "laws," so called, are the interrelated reflexes of Pain and its Struggle;
It is the source of whatever moves in the universe,
The reflex from greater pain
Affecting the lesser, always.

XXXII.

Power is accumulated pain.
A Nation only lives by its common pain
Which begets its will to struggle.

If it cannot generate new pain,
Gorged by some success and choked,
Woe to the triumphant nation, woe!

XXXIII.

Genius, too, is an accumulation of pain.
All have genius in proportion to their sufferings;
And imagination is the invisible extension of ordinary struggle.

XXXIV.

All enjoyment is based on consciousness of pain
(Even humor is the feint at pain);
The morning is like milk,
The early star of evening like a kiss,
Only as we know pain.

XXXV.

Pleasure is the fulfillment of pain in struggle;
A low pain and low struggle is low pleasure,
But the fulfillment of high pain is Peace.

How, then, my brothers, can you have pleasure,
Whether high or low,
Save it be in proportion to your pain?

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

XXXVI.

The wicked mining-camp when it appointed a sheriff,
The bloody nation when it established courts,
The barbarous people when it set up schools and colleges,
Did not hurl one God from possession of their world
And suddenly install another better one;
They did not become "better" but "worse;"
For the greater struggler does not lightly throw away his life
in petty brawls;
He protects his struggle,
And, in laws, sciences, religion, extends his struggle.

XXXVII.

All hymns must be battle-hymns;
All praise must be in terms of struggle;
All virtues are the requisites of struggle;
All vices are the condemned of struggle;
All authority must be to preserve the standard of struggle
reached;
All revolts are for the right to greater struggle;
All justice is the struggling according to the common standard
of struggle;
All knavery is the sinking below it;
All greatness is the rising above it;
All vileness is the contraction of individual struggle;
All blood-guiltiness, the cutting off of another's struggle;
All the arts must be of pain and struggle;
All statistics can be of nothing but struggle;
All prophecy must be from struggle to struggle;
All life, the fulfillment of pain in struggle.

All values are struggle-values;
All distinction is in the size of the struggle men carry;
All morality is in the increasing of struggle;
All religious endeavor is the greatest possible struggle;
All education is of and for struggle;
All relaxation and play is small-struggle;
All ornament, primping and beautifying is for prestige in aid
of struggle;
All joy is in the moment's fulfillment of pain in struggle;
All peace is proportion between pain and struggle;
All property is by right of struggle according to the standard
of struggle;

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

All barter, conversation, all sleeping and all waking is nothing;
but struggle;
All begettings are the perpetuation of struggle;
All glory and all honor must be for the greatest strugglers;
All sin is surrender.

XXXVIII.

Come, you have been standing on your head!
You thought that you struggled in order to live,
(And you pined to build the scheme of things near to the
heart's desire)
Whereas, you live in order to struggle!

XXXIX.

The lowest of all struggles to which the human can be forced
Is the struggle to live;
For that is struggle for the existence of struggle
And not for its increase.

XL.

Pain-Struggle is not the worship of might,
But its justice is absolute justice;
All may struggle in proportion to their pain.

God is in Pain-Struggle;
Whosoever suffers and struggles extends in God,
The beast according to its pain,
And man, who rules the beast, according to his.

XLI.

Many are the ways to cheat the divine Pain
Who visits man in his secret moments!
The idler hurries to light company,
The debauchee to his women,
The drinker to drink.

But the Struggler does not cheat the divine Pain,
He does not contract his struggle
And despondently hide in a corner;
But he bares his arms exultingly
And plunges into the noble struggle called work.

XLII.

The feeling of another's pain is love.
They having a slight feeling of others' pain
Are men of tact, clever men, diplomats, small strugglers.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

But they who feel all the pain of the world,
They love;
They are the greatest of all strugglers,
They battle for all the world,
Their name is The Prophets,
And their struggle is terrible.

XLIII.

The mystics who in the jungle go hiding
For a short cut to peace,
Abomination are they to the Lord
And their wisdoms rank.

Your appetites are the source of your knowledge,
You shall abide with them:
And none shall dare root them out of your nature,
Struggle-and-Pain forbid.

And sin shall not be washed out with but soap-suds;
No, it shall brand like fire:
And there shall be no salve save in struggle,
Bitter and glorious.

Console: but none shall uproot for the beaten
Pain of defeat to them;
No, tho it be but a striving with marbles,
Losing shall not seem naught.

Yet I your ways can direct to a pole-star;
You shall not stray from it—
Defeat and conquest alike shall you deem as
Foot-stools to sacred Struggle.

XLIV.

All the world's poems, musics, books,
Its statues and daubs,
Are naught in themselves
But only as witness
That a struggle was reached and was mastered.

Wherefore, the chaotic rhapsodists,
The amorous bards,
The word-loving rhymsters,
Fondling their phrases,
Are like dogs overfond of their tail-ends!

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

Poets were the olden prophets, too,
But how much besides!
They spun not their words
For any fair-seeming
But for doing, for terror, for struggle!

Wherefore, come not fawning round these things
Forever and ever;
But gather from them
The thing that is needful
For yourself and your struggle; and leave them.

XLV.

The poet is a still-born prophet,
A half-developed prophet,
For the culmination of all poetry is in prophecy.

XLVI.

These many inventions!
These arts and artifices!
They serve man's will to struggle,
They serve, but are not to be served!

XLVII.

The child dreams all day of battles and heroisms,
The country-youth abandons his certain three square meals and
buck-wheats,
He eagerly runs off to wrestle with the great city,
The aged vendor wearily pushes his cart all day
(Rather than seek the poor-house)
The beggar grins apologetically as he begs,
The farmer scolds his slothful son,
The preacher suddenly goes hunting in the woods,
The great machine roars its pain in its struggles,
The maiden seeks out the most valiant youth,
The lawyers fight like wild-cats in the court,
Judging those who sank below the standard of struggle, sits the
judge,
And an exiled people, hopelessly outnumbered, struggle on for
ages, steadfastly passing on its struggle from gen-
eration to generation;
What does it all mean, whom do these obey,
If not Pain-Struggle?

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

XLVIII.

Beauty is the quickly seen proportion between small Pain-and-Struggle.

The proportion in little struggles is easily seen;

As in well-formed bodies, flowers, games, children, colors and the like;

Wherefore it is that all pretty things are petty things.

But the proportion in great struggle is not so easily seen;

As in huge landscape, or in one weighed with care for his people,

Or in a nation bearing abuse and struggling divinely thro the ages;

It is only felt thro the soul as peace, holiness, fulfillment, justification.

Wherefore it is that great struggles need perspective to be judged;

And that the arts are to all great struggles

Like jackals nosing morsels only after the campers have departed;

And that the frivolous worship the arts and skurry after them;

But the strong unconsciously create themes for them

And compel them to follow and worship.

XLIX.

Who is concerned about free will?

Be not concerned about free will.

Whoso is one with the God of Pain-Struggle

He has the free will to Struggle.

Whosoever does not see that Struggle

Is the law of man and earth;

Whoso blasphemes—is at odds with the Law—how

Can he have free will to Struggle?

L.

Pain-Struggle is not conditioned by death,

Death does not exist for Struggle,

But Pain-Struggle conditions death.

Hence, a People may struggle two thousand years,

A people may struggle on, solitary, misunderstood,

Bearing with contumely, torture, massacre,

Wrestling with agonies of temptation,

And, in the end, struggle to Fulfillment!

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

III.

ARRAIGNMENT.

I.

Come, oh multitudinous City,
I behold your glory, your many devices,
Your telegraphs, theatres, museums, banks,
Your railroads, laboratories, airships, libraries,
Your time-saving machines and what-nots;
I see it all, and I ask,
What is all this baggage worth?
Pile it up, let it rub the guilt from the moon!
Will it renew the suicide's heart?
Or take eternal pain out of life?

Come, you clever devices, join hands and dance!
Let the telegraph pole link with the theatre!
The patent-medicine join hands with the airship!
The new social system with the sonnet!
And the rich bank with the laboratory!
Join hands, all of you, and whirl around!
For, has it not been said concerning you,
That you will root out pain from life as tho it were but a bunion,
And shut up death as in a chestnut!

II.

Lo, each man's self is becoming contracted,
'Tis small, "every man for himself!"
All secretly suspect the law of love
And madly fight the most petty of fights,
Bellies that shove, bellies that strive
That the Belly live!

And the ingenuous live but for pleasure;
Like kittens they lap or they scratch;
Their law is love, they kill their kin for it,
The suicide kills himself when it fails,
Children against parents—for love—
For the gods have come!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

And the old men do not know of the largeness
In fulness of Struggle and Pain,
But since they cannot follow with the rest,
They seem like castrated curs, and they snarl,
Ay, like the fox shorn of his tail,
Like one left behind!

And the strong men are that talk and that sip much,
The lovers of culture and coffee,
The O-how-lovelyists well skilled to praise,
Who gorge with love-lazy music forever,
Thinking, "We love"; also, "Are we
Not the salt of the earth?"

And they rejoice in their cups and their boast is
That life is for love-moaning songs,
For music, dramas, images, games, books,
And not for Struggle, the forward and stern,
But for a loaf, for a carouse,
For a bellyful!

And the poor slave who's untaught in Pain-Struggle
Hides quickly from pain in his drink;
What cannot buy his willing slavery?
While the poets preach in the pulpits—of love—
Filling the air with the east wind
And the world with doubt!

III.

Holy unto the Lord God Pain-Struggle
Is the noble struggle, labor;
Holy, cooling to the fiery pain
In the soul of man, forever.

Cursed be he who does make labor droop
And the workman hang his head,
Like a robber who robs in the night
Or like one despised of God!

Holy unto the Lord God of Pain
Is the noble struggle, labor;
Wherefore, evil it becomes that men
Should be linked to hateful tasks!

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

That in thousands, only one can live
By the struggle for his pain!
Does not groaning unto heaven cry
And the stench go thro the world?

IV.

Mine eye-balls have watched
Until they are weary, saith the Lord;
I have watched the manoeuvres of your armies and navies
And the insolence of your dreadnoughts
Which I, the Lord, do not dread.

And I see what is in your hearts, you nations!
But the prestige of the magnificent brawls of old
Shall never return again;
Not again shall there be
The ancient glory in such strife!

For the time when it served is over,
It is no longer the highest for man;
It is an exercise for beasts!
Wherefore, away with the junk of an outworn struggle,
For there is no sin like to this sin, saith the Lord!

V.

You nations, crouching upon your bloody provinces with insatiable jaws!
Think ye *thus* to struggle for possession of the world?
Behold, here is a nation without armies or navies
And which of you is not its willing province?
Away with the junk of an outworn struggle, saith the Lord!

VI.

The prophets, my forefathers, despised your armaments,
You low-struggling nations!
And since then, petitioned were you in vain with tears
For love's sake and mercy!

But I, from the terrific high heights of our own struggle,
Look down, scanning your ramparts;
Behold, I'll not beg, neither implore; but with contempt
Will I kill this war-fare!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

VII.

What are you doing upon the high places
Which my people raised unto the Lord,
You New Savants!

And why do you stamp with your cold hoofs,
Extinguishing the sacred fire upon the altar
My people built!

For among all your multitudinous "laws"
Every one of them a god, you New Savants,
Know you your right hand from your left?

Wherefore the Lord has given me this little ring,
That I should hang it in your nose
And lead you back from whence you came!

VIII.

Come, you economists, you are only joking!
The source of human struggle is not for bread;
But this itself is part of Pain-Struggle,
Like love and child-bearing, which are a part.

Moreover, you shall not win the God of struggle
With toothsome lumps of food;
All plans, all schemes, must square with Struggle;
All else is suffocation to the heart of man.

IX.

Because you said unto Love, which is blind, Lead us,
And unto Beauty, the slave, Rule,
See where you have been led
And behold how you are ruled!
For the things which are truly lovable
Are they not stuck fast in the mire?
And the things which are beautiful,
Are not grimy and violent hands continually upon them!

Since you have said unto Love-and-Beauty,
"Like butterflies will we flutter after you!"
Why should the husband cleave to his wife
Or the wife be faithful to her husband?
Why bear with each other's pain-struggle?

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

Shall they not rather go thro the world sampling men
and women like wines?
For lo! has it not been said concerning Pain,
It is the bite of a mad dog!
And as to Struggle, 'Tis a sun-spot in the Lord's divinity?

Because you have not openly dealt with the Law of the Lord,
Because you said to Pain-Struggle, Perish!
The nations are stealthily robbing still,
Harpies are their ministers,
Daily their stewards serve up the bones of men!
And who shall bring peace on earth and good will to men?
Behold, improved cannon shall establish peace!
Armor-plated battleships bring good will to men!

As for your smug citizens,
Who hath declared it unto them, saying,
"Shareholders in a democracy shall you be?"
For the Lord abhors the smugness of your citizenship,
And again and again does he cry thro his prophets,
'Every man shall bear the weight of the whole nation,
Even upon his own shoulders shall he bear it,
And shall know its pain, and answer for it,
For from the right hand of the Lord issues a law of fire!"

X.

Ah, you languor-mongers who scribble,
With what do you fill
Your countless books!

Like a drove of cattle in winter,
Whose hides mount in steam
While they munch their meal,
Are you not?

Have you felt the pain of the many,
That you make the word
More despised yet,
Frothing much?

Oh, how precious have you made silence,
You honeyless swarms,
Who buzz and buzz!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

XI.

Why do you celebrate love, you amorous poets,
More than anything else?
Is it because it is pleasant?
Damned, indeed, is this life,
If but the pleasant alone is worthy of praise!

Long ago men-kind have left you bards in the lurch
(You neglected their struggle)
Now shall the women do likewise;
Not for love shall they live;
It shall arrive that their struggle widen as well.

XII.

How the literary fakirs,
The intellectual equilibrists,
The whiners for happiness,
Have shed round the thief and desperado
The fascination of noble struggle!
And around the harlot they have cast
The halo of sacred pain!

Inasmuch as your arts and literatures teach
That the dishonorable struggle more than the honorable,
The thief more than the plodding laborer,
The self-denying goodwife less than the faithless woman,
And your whining novels are arraignments of God,
Therefore your arts and your literatures utter falsehood
And sin goes forth from your midst like a god!

Therefore it is that your idols are prize-fighters,
That your daily thoughts are of murderers,
That your fustian politicians burst with cheap little convulsions
That the budgets of your armies and navies grow,
of patriotism,
That your arms are constantly bared for blood and degradation!

XIII.

How the new darkness covers the earth!
The churches remain by their ornaments,
The ministers, by their schisms;
But without, two are howling in the night,
Even like two fighting bears.

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

And they tremble with fear in each other's eyes,
But the lust of each other's blood is keen.
Nose to nose they wait and howl,
And their foam pours on the ground from desire,
And they tremble watching each other's movements,
Waiting for a sign to plunge the world into turmoil and blood!

XIV.

Come, you gold-braided generals and admirals,
Who told you blood is the sign of struggle?
Who told you struggle must mean destruction!
Who told you strugglers wear uniforms?
Who told you battles are fought by *you*?

Come, you bold commanders, skilled in war,
And I will show you a well-planned struggle,
The most astounding earth has seen,
Making your shining brigades look foolish,
And your smart cavalcades a derision!

Come, put your heads together,
Look in thro the broken window-frame,
Crowd around the low-thatched house;
What do you see?

Only a hoary old man,
Reading with his sorrow-shaded eyes
In a mouldy, time-worn book,
Before two candles.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

IV.

THE PROPHECY OF FULFILLMENT.

I.

This is the God of your fathers, my people,
And the Law by which you suffered and struggled!
Will you not rise up,
Will you not arise for its vindication,
Like a sudden burst of song,
Like a glad-pealing hymn,
Like an advancing torch in a dark wilderness,
Like an aroused people?

For the mouth of the Lord hath declared it;
He hath smitten his thunderous palms together
And the noise of resolve hath rushed thro the heavens!
I am fulfillment! saith the Lord God.
Therefore, rise up! rise up!
You shall issue forth, oh my people!
You shall send a current of faith thro the world
And establish hope like a mountain,
And glory, so that the blind shall be aware!

II.

I see a huge bent figure struggling onward in the night,
Leaving fast-filling footprints of dusky blood,
Leaving clots of heavy blood oozing in every footprint,
Here and there he leaves pools of blood,
Every land has its portion of his blood.
And the dusky shadow of Death follows him,
The great Shade follows the Struggler fixedly.
But from decade to decade he struggles on,
From generation to generation he baffles Death,
He holds it at a distance
From generation to generation!

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

Behold, this is you, my people!
This is yourself!

And you shall continue in the night,
You shall not be quit of Death till the end,
Till you make the circuit of the earth,
Till you reach your own holy mountains!
Then shall you stop and wheel,
Then shall you suddenly turn around,
And from your rags shall you draw your tender-sharp sword,
And, while your nakedness gleams like a jewel in the sun,
You shall flash your sword upon Death;
Thro his neck shall you strike,
And your blow be but one!
And you shall lift up the head of Death before the Nations,
crying,
"Behold, O nations, the thing you dreaded!"

III.

Why was this time-disgruntling struggle!
The longest of all times or places!
The most protracted and best-fought!
Why was it?
Oh how mistaken were you in the Lord!
For it was for a white bolt of revelation;
For a shock of conviction to man;
For a blaze of glory in fulfillment!

Behold, the feverish long night is thinning out;
Lo, a shaft of light is piercing the darkness!
Come, my sallow-faced children, saith the Lord,
Come, and usher in the dawn you awaited,
For the days of your longing are full
And your reward is before you!

The Lord has torn the clouds of resistance asunder,
And shall not the birds of his bosom rush thro?
That you may pass, he will lift mountains like turnips
And breathe upon the sea with crystal bridges of safety;
For the two thousand years of pain are gathered up,
And inevitable is their fulfillment!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

IV.

Come! hasten, for around your holy mountain many are waiting,
And the world languishes!
Like a cold blast in the night
Sounds the hollow voice of unbelief,
And there's an alarm to drown the voice of your prophets,
And a skurrying to make void your law!

Come, you shall say to the fallen, Spring up!
To the discouraged, Pooh, you've just begun!
And to the Suicide, Stay your hand!
And tho they hearkened to none, they shall to you;
For your words shall have the balm of pain-knowledge,
And your judgment the prestige of struggle fulfilled.
And to the vanquished people you shall say, Yield not! struggle
on!

And to the stricken nation, Comfort you, my sister!
And your perfect faith shall plunge thro the world,
Like a lion in his youth;
And the word of hope shall go forth from your midst
Like a ship with her sails full.

V.

Come, my people, come!
I shall not hiss like a strangely fallen star,
Like an extinguishing star in a sea of indifference!
Not like a sleeping village shall you be,
Nor I like a howling dog on its outskirts!
Come up, like a mighty people,
For the period of your inhibition is over
And your winter is done!

Come, your young men dream dreams
And your old men see visions!
For a famine has come upon the land;
Not a famine for bread, nor a thirst for water
But a hunger for the word of the Lord;
Ay, and for a deed of the Lord!
For the heart of man has become like a burnt city,
And his hope, like a fallen tree!

Two thousand years have you been a rock,
A wall justifying God to man;
Now shall you clinch the matter!
You shall show the efficacy of your great longing

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

And of all human longing!
You shall prove the immortality of your struggle
And of all human struggle!
And an exulting faith shall stream thro the world!

VI.

Come! only a People, and a People's deed of faith
Can do the work of the Lord!
For what can this world's devices offer to man,
If life itself is unjustified canker
And a dreadful void is in every heart?
These brave sciences, arts and devices!
What can they do but stand and stammer and fumble
Like a thief caught in his shame!

Wherefore, look not to the right, neither to the left,
For there is none to take your place!
But from your pampered attachments disentangle,
From your comforts and littlenesses step forth!
For woe to you if the Lord call and you answer not!
Where, then, shall you hurry your shame?
For earth shall have no pit to bury it,
Neither the sea water enough to cover it!

VII.

For who am I, that I should speak thus,
That I should be compelled to utter these things,
Save it proceedeth from the Lord?
For, wherever I fled, his secret voice echoed,
His reverberating message followed;
In the restless rustling of the leaves it followed me,
In the grimaces of the clouds it was not absent,
In the ravings of cities I heard it,
In the desert of my solitude it accompanied me,
In your own faces I saw it plainly,
In the listlessness of your youth,
In the haggard faces of your old men,
In the mighty lines of their unconquerably patient faces,
Everywhere I beheld it plainly,
And the Lord spoke to me continually!

VIII.

Marvelous is the love of parents for children;
Marvelous!
Yet it is thus they extend their own struggle;
Even thus.

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

For the Lord has devised no way of being true to others
Save thro being true to yourself!
How, then, can you keep faith with the world
And be false to yourself?

Wherefore, I have brought you message,
For the mouth of the Lord hath declared it!
His thunderful voice hath uttered it!
"To your holy mountain, my chosen People!"

Therefore, naught shall avail
But this deed of faith must be accomplished,
And the struggle which your fathers before you shirked **not**
Must have its inevitable fulfillment!

IX.

Go, plead before the world!
Beg for a respite!
Show them your palms of innocence!
Press your favors in money!

But you shall offer your heavy donations in vain!
Your criminal statistics shall not avail you!
Your records shall afford no harbor!
And your weakly-creditable acts only provoke sneers!

For what partnership is this you would make with praise and
adulation,
Whose covenant is with the Lord?
Are you a clown to grimace for applause
Or a performer to bow for hand-clappings?

No, my People, there are no melting-pots for you,
No pleasant rendezvous,
No cozy-corner in easy insignificance!
The Lord God is against you on this proposition!

X.

Behold, you have acquitted yourself honorably in the marts
And in the daily struggles of business;
And your advertisements are eloquent with struggle
And you have hung them in the proud streets of the cities
So that he who runs may read;
And all this is not accounted to your discredit by the Lord,
For it has its time and its place.

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

But behold, there is a richer item of business before you,
A greater and more wonderful task,
A heavier responsibility to God and to man!
For, to what end has the Lord kept you safely in the hollow of
his hand
And borne you triumphantly thro fire and sword?
Is it to establish a counting-house?
Or hope and faith in the hearts of men?

XI.

O mine own People!
What can you bring in the face of bloodshed?
Is it not a greater struggle?
And what will you teach in the presence of death?
Shall it not be faith?
And what can you show before the eye of despair?
Is it not Fulfillment!

Rise up, oh my People!
For the Lord has not forgotten his troth!
He has not said to the patent nostrum, Go bring faith,
Nor to the new machine, Be my Chosen!
But now, more than ever and ever before,
He looks about for his valiant People,
His voice peals for his Appointed!

XII.

Come, O my People of the congested tenements,
You beloved of the Lord,
Think you God has quite forgotten you?
You long-suffering matrons, toiling to rear glorious children!
You grave heads-of-families, weighed with trouble!
You maidens pining secretly in your windows with no power to
speak,
Yet briskly meeting the issues of the next morning!
You eager, restless youths parching for fulfillment!
Think you the Lord has altogether forgotten you?

For the Lord purposes divine things concerning you!
And even in your hopeless sweatshops,
In your rude, crowded, meaningless streets,
In your murky quarters, dark as despair,

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

A white light beats upon all your movements!
For your pain is sacred unto the Lord!
You shall take up his shining standard
And fulfill him in an astonishment of brightness
And in a trail of glory!

For, of old time, O my People,
When you feasted, who went hungry!
And when you built, who was not enriched!
And now, when you arise and fulfill,
Who shall go empty?
For, you shall make holy for all men
Their daily commonplace rushes and struggles,
And a sacred significance shall attend all strivings
And the work of all hands shall be called Holy War!

XIII.

Who hath required this degradation at your hands,
That you be performers and virtuosi
And prophets skillful in not offending,
And become the high-priests of foolish fashions
And the amen-sayers of pleasure,
And prattle of the arts as of God?

For the Lord has chosen you to be his peculiar People,
From the midst of the nations has he chosen you
To drive faith in Pain-Struggle, the hard-to-accept!
For the Law of the Lord is a law of fire,
Great and terrible,
And out of his hand none can deliver!

What of the lazy looks of the easy livers!
And the gay screams of the joy-riders!
For a secret little canker is busy at their heart-strings
And these many inventions avail not!
For there is no peace save the only Peace,
The Peace thro faith!

Wherefore, issue forth like your fathers before you
To answer the call of the Lord;
Issue forth like a tongue of flame,
Like a long-separated lover to meet his beloved,
Like the eager lightning to dart thro the clouds,
Like an exiled People returning home!

THE STRUGGLER PROPHECIES BEFORE THE GREAT CITY.

XIV.

Behold, the eyes of the Lord are rays
To scour the world for his Chosen;
Who shall escape his vision?
No, there is no escape.
Hide and your sin shall hide with you;
Bury your thoughts in sleep—and you shall dream;
Drink, and it shall all be dregs!

Daggers shall fall from the lips of your uncriticising friends,
And from the mouths of your flippant children, arrows!
Yea, for the holy command unfulfilled!
For the task of faith avoided!
For the glory sold for a pot of lentils!
For the patting of satisfied bellies!

XV.

Behold, in the thick of your pleasures,
When you think you have buried the Past
And fully settled with Pain,
Lo, then the shadow of the unfulfilled shall come upon you,
And your misery be as a ruler!

For the Lord takes no delight in vanity
And the grunts of satiety he respects not.
Tho your women leave trails of perfume behind them,
And your aping young men preen themselves with good looks,
Yet, shall the glory of the Lord turn from this
And ye be left naked upon a rock.

XVI.

Lo, the young races now look around for new knowledge;
The water you gave, it was good;
But lo! it has dried up, 'tis vanished now!
They furtively crawl to the pestilent marsh
Unto the old-ruling vile gods
Which you tumbled down!

Get you upon your high mountain, my people!
The time which was coming has come!
(Give up, O North, and keep not back, O South!)
The live red coal has been pressed to your lips;
Now ye know pain, prophesy now,
Get ye up again!

THE BOOK OF PAIN-STRUGGLE.

XVII.

Up, and take your station, my people,
Brace yourself for the shock of combat;
For the struggle is become your struggle,
The battle has rolled round to you, again,
And the burden worthy of your strength;
Up! for there are none to take your place!

The thick dust rolls on and away,
The issues unfold themselves clearly,
The gods have risen against you again,
The bacchantes have kicked up their skirts,
They march forth to do battle
And their armor gleams with surprise!

The prestige of their arts is great,
And their insolence grows;
In their train are the old abominations,
The mad pleasure-seeking and callousness,
The burlesquers, dancers and prize-fighters,
The sensual singers and performers!

The tumult of pictures and statues is here again,
The babel of many tongues and advices,
The multitude of "laws," each one a god,
The open worship of war,
The secret faith in ultimate sin,
And the old, old despair is come again!

Up! oh my People!—roll this in the dust!
For the kismet-ridden East waits for a champion,
And the restless West for a new saviour!
Therefore, let the word go forth for deliverance, my People,
And the cry for accomplishment ring out!
I am Fulfillment! saith the Lord God.